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Religion in the Plays of Sophocles

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PREFACE

The original plan of this thesis embraced the study of the references to Greek religion in all the extant tragedies and fragments, but it has been found expedient to confine the work to a thorough examination of the works of Sophocles. Evidence in Aeschylus, in Euripides, in Aristophanes, as well as in other authors, has been frequently used to supplement and explain the Sophoclean passages.

Except in cases where ambiguity would result, the names of the Greek plays are given in abbreviated form. Numerous other sources of information in regard to religion, both ancient and modern, are frequently quoted. The notes in the edition of the plays of Sophocles by R. C. Jebb, and those in the edition of the fragments by A. C. Pearson are constantly referred to here. Much use has been made likewise of the work of L. R. Farnell, especially his *Cults of the Greek States*, and of O. Gruppe's *Gr. Myth. u. Religionsgeschichte*. The authorities chiefly consulted are listed in the bibliography. Other important treatises and dissertations to which reference is made are mentioned in connection with the footnotes.

The following editions have been used: the plays of Aeschylus by A. Sidgwick, Oxford, 1899; those of Sophocles by W. Dindorf (S. Mekler), Leipzig, 1911; those of Euripides by G. Murray, Oxford, 1913; those of Aristophanes by F. W. Hall and W. M. Geldhart, Oxford, 1900; the fragments of Sophocles by A. C. Pearson, Cambridge, 1917; those of the other dramatists by A. Nauck, Leipzig. 1889.

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INTRODUCTION

That a people's religion has many vital points of contact with the moral and spiritual energy of the race, is a truth which has been recognized more and more of late years. Consequently studies of the religious beliefs and practices of ancient peoples have been made by many writers. Too much, however, has been written from intuition or from conjectures based on slight evidence; whereas in this field of investigation there is special need of definite facts.¹

But an attempt to give the facts of any religion is by no means an easy task, and it is a particularly difficult and delicate one in the case of a religion like that of the ancient Greeks,²—a people whose religious ideas were at no time formulated into settled dogma. For, apart from the Orphic sects, the Greeks had no organized system of theology, no standards, nor any generally accepted head to control or coordinate local varieties. The existence of many different cults throughout Greece showed this lack of a strong centralizing force; the tradition of each particular shrine was the authority followed. While the Delphic oracle and the inventive imagination of the poets gave a semblance of unity to the public worship, in private and local cults there was wide divergence in practice and belief.

Yet, in spite of its difficulty, this subject, especially those views of the gods and of man's destiny which were held by the Greeks of the second, third and fourth quarters of the fifth century B.C., has great attraction for the student of comparative religion and for the lover of the classics. For not only was this age the most brilliant one of Greece, but it was also a period when ideas of the supernatural were not, to any great extent, complicated by the rationalizing tendency of later times. Then, too, all the fifth century

¹ Cf. Wissowa, Preface to *Relig. u. Kult de Römer*.

² The religion of the ancient Greeks is a more difficult study, than e.g., that of the Romans: for, in spite of all its obscurities, the ancient Roman religion was, after all, the religion of a single community,—a community which was gifted neither with rich fancy nor with great speculative power, and which, moreover, at an early period allowed its public worship to come under the control of a powerful political priesthood.

writings of the lightest order reflect deep concern with the problems of human life and of man's relation to the gods. To recognize and, in a certain way, to sympathize with this religious element is a step towards a full understanding of these great works.

In our study of the religious side of the Greeks we find that there is very little direct evidence in the way of ritual formulae or prayers extant. So our main source of information lies in their art, their inscriptions, and, most of all, in their literature. Aside from its other interesting aspects, then, Greek literature, particularly the drama, should be studied for the constructive evidence it affords on contemporary religious conceptions.

Now the importance of the great fifth century dramatists, as witnesses and as exponents of the religious thought of their age, can hardly be overestimated. Their public was far less limited than that to which the other writers addressed their works. Furthermore, we may safely assume that Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes dealt, to a large extent, with ideas familiar to their audience. For the fact these dramatists were always competing for a prize would naturally lead them to express ideas compatible with those prevalent among the people; that is, we may expect to find these poets using names and phrases adapted to the current views, so as to be quite intelligible to the masses, as well as to the classes.

Caution is necessary, therefore, in ascribing primitive or far-stretched views to these writers. For example, we should try to discover, not what Zeus or Ceres signified originally, but what they stood for at the time these plays were in vogue; and we should believe that, when the poet speaks of Helios and Ares, these names represent the anthropomorphic deity and not a kind of lurid Setting Sun,—unless there is some definite reason for such an interpretation, either in the particular context or in the popular contemporary belief. In brief, it is the acquired meaning, rather than the primitive superstition underlying ritual words and practice, that helps us most to understand Greek religion and Greek thought.

On the other hand, the anthropological method of interpreting Greek literature is sometimes followed beyond due limits. It is obvious that, to make clear some things that would otherwise appear incongruous and meaningless, we must often go back to the original intention and significance of ritual names and phrases and customs. Much that is archaic, introduced into the drama by

poetic and dramatic license, can be explained only as survivals from primitive belief and ritual.

Moreover, among all the religious references in Greek drama, there must be a considerable number which cannot be regarded as reflections of the belief of the audience, but which are expressions of the writers' own ideas, for an author's personality impairs, to some degree, the value of his testimony as to the facts and usages ascribed to the people at large, and, inasmuch as these dramatists were likewise poets, their allusions to the gods are not always creditable evidence of actual contemporary belief. Moreover, Greek tragic themes were, for the most part, conventional and stereotyped material, and, while the poet could alter them to some extent by ideas of his own about the divine government of the universe and about man's relation to his fellow man and to deity, the main outlines of the myth were, after all, definitely determined by tradition. In each play those religious and ethical ideas had to be treated that were especially connected with the particular theme. Thus, in reading some of the choral passages that celebrate the gods, we often wonder whether these expressions denote any real religious feeling on the part of the poet or of his public, or whether these words merely set forth the theme in poetic fashion,—dramatically appropriate at the time, but not intended to be given wider application. In such cases, one may best approach the real meaning of the phraseology employed by comparing it to the symbolic mythology of other poets and to the technique of other playwrights.

Besides this, it should be borne in mind how fragmentary is the evidence at our disposal. For, out of perhaps one hundred and twenty plays of Sophocles, there are extant, exclusive of some fragments, only seven plays.³ A similar condition exists in regard to the works of the three other great dramatists. We must always remember these lacunae in our records.

Finally, we may note that the prominence of the religious element⁴ in Greek drama is quite natural in view of its origin.⁴ For, from the

³ Even if we possessed all the plays, we would have to know their dates in order to speak authoritatively of any development of the religious ideas of the poet himself. But we are not attempting the impossible task of ascertaining the sum total of Sophocles' own religious views.

⁴ For the original and inherent religious character of Greek drama, cf. Dieterich, Entstehung d. Trag., *Arch. f. Religionswiss.*, XI, 187f.; Fairbanks, *Gk. Relig.*, 256; Flickinger, *The Gk. Theatre and its Drama*, 119ff.

beginning to its last representatives, its inherent and persistent religious meaning was self-evident. Performed at the Dionysiac festivals, beside the altar of Dionysus, and in the presence of his priest, Greek drama was a natural response to the popular demand for the enrichment of ritual by art, as a tribute to the gods.⁵

⁵ The question of the ultimate source of the Gk. drama is much disputed: it may have sprung from the worship of Dionysus (cf. Gruppe, 1436; Farnell, V. 229ff.; Harrison, *Prolegom.*, 568ff); or its origin may be traced to chthonic ritual, particularly that held at the grave of the heroes (cf. Crusius, *Preuss. Jahrb.* LXXIV. 394; Hirt, *Indogermanen* 477ff., 726; Ridgeway, *Athenaeum* 3995, 660, and also his *Origin of Greek Tragedy*).

I. A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE PLAYS

In Tragedy, as elsewhere in Greek literature, religion and mythology are closely associated. Mythology derived much of its content from cult-ritual; while, on the other hand, many of the beings created by the imagination of the poets came to be worshipped. Still, though thus employed as the framework of tragedy and though often incorporated into cult-ritual, mythology had little to do with Greek religion proper; for it was not an essential element in the worship or in the emotions expressed by that worship. But, on account of the nature of the investigation in hand, mythological and religious references cannot always be kept distinct here.

As a mythologist, Sophocles, following the Homeric conception of the gods to a great extent, makes no attempt to purge the traditional mythology of the baser elements it contained. We find the most glaring inconsistencies in his works,—the noblest ethical concepts side by side with a belief in gods who seem to command matricide (e.g. Apollo in the *Electra*), and who seem capricious and even cruel (e.g. Athena in the *Ajax*). These inconsistencies exist, explain them as we may. Unlike Euripides, Sophocles makes no attempt to rationalize these myths or to recast them on a different basis; he accepts what suits his purpose and rejects or passes over the rest, with little or no comment.¹ In many passages of these plays, however, Sophocles represents the gods as ethical beings, who reward the good and punish the wicked. He upholds a noble standard of true piety and expresses views of the eternal laws of purity and of holiness in such a way as to make him worthy of a place among the great moral teachers of all time (cf. *Aj.* 1130, *El.* 1093ff., *O.T.* 863ff., 450ff.).

A consciousness of the omnipotence of the divine, the unchangeableness of the great moral standards, the superiority of virtue, the fickleness of fortune, the power of fate, the need of reverence toward

¹ It was this genial adaptability, this willingness to retain the old views in their integrity, more perhaps than his rare genius, that popularized this dramatist among his contemporaries.

the gods, and of pity for unhappy men,—these are the dominant ideas that pervade his work. Specific instances will be taken up for examination later. We may here merely cite the passages where his characters express belief in divine providence: *Aj.* 86, 118, 128ff., 455f., 756ff., 835ff., 950, 1034ff., 1130, 1390; *El.* 175, 1062ff., 1093ff., *O.T.* 275ff., 964f., 1382f.; *Ant.* 127f., 369, 584f., 604f., 683, 797, 854, 921, 1113f.; *Tr.* 126ff.; 297f., 1264ff.; *Ph.* 446ff., 992, 1441ff.; frs. 895, 961, 964. On the other hand, Sophocles is a true artist and presents his legendary tales as dramas that are valuable, not as themes that derive their chief importance and value from the moral² involved, but for their own sake. It is worthy of note in this connection that he keeps his religious views rather in the background and does not have his characters reason so openly about the deeper things of life as do those of Euripides.

In the *Electra* the supernatural agency has considerable importance.³ Throughout the whole course of his actions the oracle commanding Orestes to avenge the murder of his father is a potent factor. First the protection of the chthonic gods is invoked by ceremonies at Agamamnon's tomb by Orestes and later by his sisters. Next Clytemnestra is visited by an ominous dream and is moved to offer sacrifices and half-secret prayers to Apollo. Then, before the avengers entered the palace, they salute the images of the gods. Finally, in the last tense moment before the murder, the Chorus declare that the Erinyes have passed under the room as divine cooperators in the deed of vengeance, and that Hermes is the guide of the avenger.

A deep undercurrent of reverence towards the power of the divine runs likewise through the *Antigone*. The Creon of this play is not at heart a pious man, as revealed in his utterances in 11, 486ff., (where he defies Zeus *ἐρκετός*), 658f. (where he defies Zeus *ξιναῖμος*), 780 (where he speaks scornfully of pious reverence for the dead), 1039, (where he makes impious reference to the eagles of Zeus).⁴

² Cf. Sheppard, *Gk. Trag.*, Camb. (1911) p. 89; "To Sophocles the story is the thing. His aim is not to use the story as the basis of a religious poem; . . . it is neither ethics nor theology that he gives us; . . . he is first of all a dramatist, only secondarily a teacher.

³ Jebb has made this clear in the introduction to his edition of this play.

⁴ The Creon here is not the same character as in the *Antigone*: the difference in temperament is quite decided: cf. Wilamowitz (*Hermes* XXXIV) and Nauck (Introd. ed. *Ant.* p. 22).

But the laws of heaven have overwhelming force in spite of human opposition. That is the lesson taught by this play with terrible impressiveness. And because she reverences these abiding laws of the gods rather than man's decrees, Antigone dies like a Christian martyr.⁵

The necessity of inviolate piety towards the gods is further emphasized in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. For this drama shows the utter helplessness of man in the hands of the all-governing power,—whether that be called a personal deity or the abstract force of fate. The necessity of humility on the part of mortals in the face of this unseen omnipotent power is the lesson here taught in language of reverence and wonder. At first Jocasta treats with contempt and neglect the sacred oracles, arguing their failure of fulfillment. But, when the predictions are fully verified, strong proof is given of the value of deep and unfailing veneration for the decrees of heaven. ‘If one should say this is the handiwork of some supernatural power, one could blame his judgment?’’ (1.828f.)

Again, in the *Oedipus Coloneus*, the power of the supernatural is felt throughout. Though no deity makes a visible appearance here, the immediate presence of the supernatural force is felt in the person of Oedipus, and the whole play is distinguished by fullness of religious thought. Oedipus himself is aware of the divine inspiration upon his arrival at Colonus, and it is evidently under divine guidance that he, though blind, still leads the way at the final hour. At l. 1540 he says: ἐπέγει γάρ με τ' οὐκ θεοῦ παρόν: i.e., a mysterious prompting from an invisible force within him, no less than from the storm without, inspires him with sudden confidence. He foretells that a miraculous departure—θέσφατος βίου τελετή—will be his lot (I.1472f.). Theseus does not relate the vision seen at the death of Oedipus, nor does he reveal the location of the grave; but his language about the passing of the aged hero is, nevertheless, awe-inspiring (1586ff.).

This divine call to Oedipus (I.1627f.) reminds one, in its form of address, of the way in which the goddess Athena calls Ajax (*Aj.* 71). In the latter play (viz. the *Ajax*) the two main ideas stressed

⁵ Jebb. (*Essays and Addresses*, I. The Genius of Soph., p. 3) says: “The issue is not a simple conflict between state-laws and religion duty. It is a conflict between state-law too harshly enforced and natural affection set above the laws. Creon is right in the letter and wrong in the spirit: Ant. is right in the spirit and wrong in the letter.”

are the fatal results of impiety and presumption, and the duty of burial of the dead. Ajax appears sinful because of the overweening pride and arrogant self-confidence with which he has rejected the aid of heaven (cf. 112ff., 761ff., 773).⁶ Athena points the moral of his ruin: 'Behold, Odysseus, the strength of the gods' (*ib.* 118ff.). Again, in II. 127-133, she warns Odysseus against the presumption towards the gods. As to the treatment of Athena here, we may remark that Euripides would have worked out this theme in such a way as to make Athena as hateful and as cruel as possible. Sophocles makes her show a harsh and ruthless nature toward her victim; but he also has the goddess herself point the moral of his ruin in very noble language (127ff.), where no desire of vengeance for personal reasons is implied. Moreover, in regard to the justice of her treatment of Ajax, we should bear in mind the fact that Athena is represented as having visited him with madness only at the moment when he was preparing to murder the chieftains under the cover of darkness, when they were defenseless and asleep (45ff.). And it is through this ruin of Ajax that Odysseus is aroused to a recognition of the divine power of Athena and to that feeling which was expected of the spectators (121ff.).

The power of the gods over the lives of mortals is seen likewise in the *Trachiniae*. Schlegel and others have doubted the authenticity of this drama because it seemed to them to be lacking in depth and significance, as compared with the other extant plays of Sophocles. This drama is not, to be sure, decidedly religious in tone. Still it contains some important supernatural elements.⁷

In the *Philoctetes* the supernatural is somewhat more prominent: the bow of Heracles, the prophecy regarding the capture of Troy by the joint efforts of Philoctetes and Neoptolemus, and the persuasive influence of Heracles upon Philoctetes,—all are important factors in the development of the action. When the divine Heracles appears (1442ff.) he urges unfailing piety to the gods in the famous

⁶ No trace of this presumptuous attitude of Ajax towards the gods appears in the *ILiad*. Sophocles took the argument of this play from the *Little Iliad* and from Q. Smyr. V, 359ff.

⁷ The question of the suffering and punishment of Ajax, Deianira, and other characters in these plays will be more fully discussed later in connection with the larger subject of fatalism.

passage: ὡς τὰλλα πάντα δεύτερ' ἡγεῖται πατήρ / Ζεύς· οὐ γὰρ εἰσέβεια συνθνήσκει βροτοῖς· / κ' ἀν ζῶσι θάνωσιν οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.⁸

⁸ Jebb assumes this to mean that the effect of piety does not cease with man's life on earth, that it is imperishable and serves as a good example to men of after time; i.e. piety has an abiding influence on human conduct and that paramount importance is attributed to it by the gods. But the MS. reading does not have *ou*, thus suggesting that 'piety passes from the individual to the life hereafter, there to find its reward of happiness.' As to this reading seems to narrow the scope of thought, Jebb with Dindorf and other scholars have adopted the emendation of Gedikins (viz. the insertion of *ou*).

II. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE GODS

The Sophoclean characters appear on terms of familiar intercourse with their gods. For the most part they conceived them as creatures resembling themselves, only on a nobler plan. In a number of passages we find indication of a sense of good fellowship, as though the gods were felt to be in sympathy with mortals. Odysseus, for example, has the greatest confidence in Athena's protecting power, and he addresses her in terms of devotion (*Ajax* 14, 34ff.). Such confidence in the gods is displayed in many other passages. We note, for instance, that at the crisis in the *Antigone* Eurydice goes to the temple of Athena to pray for help. In the *Oedipus Tyrannus* (916ff.) Jocasta decides to visit the shrines of the gods with offerings of wreaths and incense (916ff.). Ajax, too, at the parting with Tekmessa, tells the mother of his son to have recourse to divine help for protection and comfort (*Aj.* 684ff.). Such instances of faith in prayer are quite common in Sophocles and will be discussed in our chapter on prayer.

A familiar attitude of confidence in the gods is illustrated also in the appeal of Ajax to Zeus, his progenitor (*ib.* 387). Antigone likewise appeals to her ancestral gods, not merely protectors of the race, but also her ancestors. Sometimes this confidence in the gods takes rather a humorous turn, as in fr. 228—'Tis better to do a favor to the gods than to men.' In the *Oedipus Coloneus* there is evidence of disinterested devotion to the gods (cf. e.g. 1180).

Throughout these plays there are many references to a consciousness of a supernatural power that prompts men to action or restrains them, as the case may be.¹ In the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, e.g. the chorus believes that it was by divine aid that Oedipus has saved them from the Sphinx (37ff.). A similar attitude is expressed in *El.* 1264ff. where Orestes says: 'The gods urged me to come.' And his sister answers, 'I consider it a divine mission.' (1269f. cf. *ib.* 162.) Likewise in *O.C.* 282 the gods are thought of as aiding men to do

¹ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 393, Eur *Med.* 625. Such tragic maxims about the power of the gods are frequently with burlesque solemnity in Gk. comedy; cf. e.g. fr. Gk. Com. *P.S.* 1. & 2, 126, 65.

good and restraining them from evil. This feeling of working under the guidance of the gods is often expressed in a manner that implies cooperation between gods and men; e.g. *Aj.* 765, *O.T.* 145f., 274 fr. 142 fr. 479, *O.C.* 1012. Antigone twice uses the expression *ἐν θεοῖς*, a forensic term denoting the tribunal, in assigning the proper judgment of her case to the gods (*Ant.* 459, 925). In *Aj.* 778f., where the messenger repeats the prophecy of Chalchas, the phrase *σὺν θεῷ* qualifies the augury. In the *Oedipus Coloneus*,² Polyneices speaks in a similar manner (128ff.), while Theseus assures the aged Oedipus that he will be safe, 'if one of the gods preserves me too' (1209f.). Again in *Ant.* 331 we find the guard keenly aware of his dependence upon the gods for the preservation of his life: *σωθεὶς ὀφείλω τοῖς θεοῖς παλλὴν χάριν*. Likewise in *Aj.* 1057, Menelaus expresses gratitude to whatever god had saved the generals (*θεῶν τις τήνδε πέραν ἔθεσεν*), and again, in l. 1128, he expresses his conviction that it was heaven that had saved him from the mad Ajax. Teucer then retorts that gratitude is due the gods: *μή νῦν ἀτίμα θεοῖς, θεοῖς σεσωμένος* (*ib.* 1129). We shall see, later on, that gratitude toward heaven is one of the highest aspects of real religion and that it finds expression in Greek drama, not only in such words as these, but also in the form of vows and sacrifice.³

In many passages referring to the gods a combination of trust and gratitude is expressed. Creon, speaking of the past troubles in the state, says: 'The gods, having shaken the state with a great storm, now restore it to safety,' (*Ant.* 162). In *O.C.* 664f. Theseus assures Oedipus: 'Even without my aid thou mayest take heart, since Phoebus sent me here.' Likewise Neoptolemus bids Philoctetes put his trust in the gods (*Ph.* 1374), referring to the oracle that is spoken of in 11.1336-1343. Neoptolemus in turn, is urged to trust the gods, when the chorus, seeking to allay his disquietude, say: 'Well, my son, heaven will see to that.' (*ib.* 843). So sure is the feeling of nearness to the gods on the part of Oedipus, that he tells the Athenians: 'The gods as their own heralds, make true announcement of what is to befall me.' (*O.C.* 1511f.) And the chorus in *Ant.* 376f., when surprised by the appearance of the young heroine led by the guards, cries: 'I take this to be a sign from heaven'; i.e. the matter is so astounding as to seem to them a portent from

² Cf. Eur. *Med.* 915, Ar. *Pl.* 114.

³ Particularly in the chapters on prayers and ceremonies.

heaven. In both fr. 247 and fr. 950 wisdom is looked upon as a gift of the gods, a gift given to the just, not to the wicked.⁴

The deep consciousness of the superiority of divine power over mortals is one of the most striking aspects of the attitude towards the gods shown in these plays. We see this, e.g. in *El.* 696f., where the messenger declares: 'When one of the gods send harm, not even the strong man can escape.' Again, in *Aj.* 455f., the hero remarks: 'If one of the gods send harm, even a weaker man can prevail over a strong man.' Antigone expresses a similar confidence in the great power of the gods (*O.C.* 252ff.). The chorus, in turn, expresses belief in the truth of a proverb to the same effect (*ib.* 622ff.). The uselessness of resistance to this superior might of heaven is expressed by Oedipus (*O.T.* 280f.)⁵ 'No man can force the gods against their will.' Creon, too, finally realizes the futility of striving with supernatural power. (*Ant.* 1106, 1276ff.) The gentle Tekmessa also learns that resistance to fate and the gods is folly (*Aj.* 489f.). Even Ajax himself eventually admits man's helplessness before the power of heaven, (*ib.* 666ff.). When their leader reflects upon the scorn and disgrace that have come upon him, the chorus seek to comfort him: $\zeta'\nu\tau\iota\theta\epsilon\hat{\omega}\pi\hat{\alpha}\gamma\epsilon\lambda\hat{\alpha}\kappa'\omega\delta\hat{\iota}\rho\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ (384, cf. *ib.* 118.). Similar passages about the infinite power of the gods are found in *Ant.* 584, 596f., 604f., 613f., 1103f.; *Ph.* 464f.; *O.T.* 828f., 872ff.; *O.C.* 270ff., 371f., 394, 964; *Aj.* 949. 1036f., *Tr.* 491f.; frs. 585, 680 and 964.

Occasionally some comment is made on the inscrutability of the counsels of the gods (fr. 659, *O.T.* 280, *Ph.* 45). Yet not infrequently the Sophoclean characters accuse the gods of injustice; expressions of this kind are freely dispersed: cf. e.g. *Aj.* 181, 440ff., 1020;⁶ *O.C.* 964f., *O.T.* 828f., *Tr.* 1264ff. Thus, after his utter disgrace and fatal madness, Ajax considers that he has been abandoned by the gods and that he, therefore, owes them no allegiance (*Aj.* 457; cf. *ib.* 440, 776f., 952ff., 970, 1128). This idea,—that the gods lead mortals to ruin,—appears also in *Ant.* 623, *El.* 696, *O.C.* 252ff., and fr. 615. Sometimes the possibility of the gods sending illusions to men to cheat them is suggested, as in *Ant.* 1218, and *O.C.* 628. So, too, in *Aj.* 245f., the chorus expresses its conviction that it was

⁴ Cf. *Aes.* fr. 302 *Sept.* 703; *Eur. Her.* 1338.

⁵ Cf. *Theog.* 403ff.

⁶ Philoctetes shows a pessimistic mood, in both these passages, a mood that is explained by the physical and mental anguish under which he is laboring. Later he shows real confidence in heaven; cf. e.g. his rebuke of Odysseus in ll. 991f.

some god, no mortal power, that taught the hero the terrible words which he had uttered in his frenzy. The reference here is evidently to a malignant divine power; cf. O.T. 263f., 1300f., 1328.⁷ This belief also appears in *Ant.* 1272ff., where Creon speaks of the grievous lesson he has learned: *ἐν δ' ἐμῷ κάρᾳ / θεὸς τότ' ἄρα μεγα βάρος μ' ἔχων / ἐπαισεν, ἐν δέσεισεν ἀγρίαις ὁδοῖς.* Heracles likewise cries: *ὦ Ζεῦ, ποι γάσ ηκω (Tr. 683).* This is more than a passing exclamation; the hero seems to call upon the god, his father, as the primary power that brought about his miseries. Again at l. 994., Heracles accuses Zeus of ingratitude, exclaiming: *ὦ Ζεῦ / οἴαν μ' ἀρ θον, οἴαν* (cf. also 1002). In the *Philoctetes*, too, we find instances of a cynical attitude toward the gods and toward the world order. After inquiries about the Greek warriors, Neoptolemus says: 'War does not willingly destroy the base, but ever the brave.' So, too, Ajax feels that he is hated by the gods (cf. *Aj.* 457f.). In his despair, Oedipus also cynically regards himself as the most hateful of mortals to the gods (*O.T.* 1345, 1479, 1519. *O.C.* 103ff.).

Closely allied to cynicism, in fact almost identical with it, is the skeptical attitude toward heaven; thus, at ll. 446ff. of the *Philoctetes*, the hero exclaims: 'Nothing bad will die, so well the gods do fence it round about, and still they joy to send the crafty and the cunning back from Hades; while they ever send the just and good below.' Nevertheless, though years of pain and neglect have embittered him, in the end this hero has no real doubt of divine justice (cf. 991f., 1036f.). He hopes for an ultimate adjustment of his wrongs, though meanwhile he gives vent to a skepticism that is not unnatural under the circumstances (cf. *ib.* 254, 417, 427, 1020). Another example of skepticism regarding the divine government of the world occurs in a fragment of the *Aleites*. There the speaker bitterly avers: 'The base ever prosper, while the good suffer; whereas the opposite should be the case, as the gods should openly reward justice and punish injustice among mortals' (fr. 107). The first passage (viz. *Ph.* 446ff.), however, is entirely in character and, as we have remarked, might well be expected from the hero under the circumstances. And still the authorship of this passage has been doubted, and conjecturally ascribed to Euripides.⁸ Moore

⁷ Cf. Eur. *Med.* 915. in Ar. *Pl.* 114 the expression *sun theo* is of course mock tragic. This old anarthrous expression of belief in divine guidance of human affairs is frequently found in Gk. literature.

⁸ The fragmentary condition of the passage leaves us in doubt on this point. Cf. Eur. fr. 293.

(*The Religious Thought of the Greeks*, p. 100), citing both these passages, contends that they are the only ones in Sophocles where the characters may be said to criticize the gods. Yet we find not a few other cases of religious skepticism, all however apparently said in character. In fr. 460, for example, a character says that 'no one from Dodona or the vales of Pytho could persuade him.' Moreover at ll. 825ff., after Electra's lament over the funeral urn, the chorus utterance implies that the gods are guilty of conivance in the wrong doing; e.g., at ll. 244ff., where she suggests the possibility of all piety's fading away, her skepticism has the effect of a curse. Throughout the early part of this play, indeed, Electra's impatient despair is very often tinged with similar expressions of skepticism. Even in the *Oedipus Coloneus* we find some momentary expressions of skepticism on the part of various characters. At l. 1331 e.g., Polyneices qualifies his statement thus: 'If there be any trust in oracles,' and at the crisis of her distress, Antigone, doubtful of finding any comfort from gods or men, cries: *οίμοι, τάλαινα, ποῖ φύγω*; *ποιαν λάβω θεῶν ἄρηξιν ή βροτῶν*; (*ib.* 829f.). Likewise in the *Antigone* skepticism is more or less apparent in a number of passages; cf. e.g., the taunting words of Creon in ll. 778ff. The chorus, too, is skeptical of the power of prayer: *μή ννν προσεύχον μηδέν· ὡς πεπρω μένης οὐκ ἔστι θγητοῖς συμφοροῖς ἀπαλλαγή* (1337f.). Even the heroine herself, a character world-famous for piety, shows a certain momentary despairing skepticism, as she hesitates before going to her death (ll. 921-926).

Lines 1039-1044 of this play have aroused a great deal of discussion regarding the possible skepticism therein implied. The Seer has declared (l. 1016) that the altars of the gods throughout the city have been polluted by the presence of the unburied corpse. Creon thereupon replies that he will not allow the burial 'even if the eagles of Zeus should carry the carrion morsels to the throne of Zeus; for nothing mortal can pollute the gods.' This appears to be an utterance of skepticism, similar to that expressed by Jocasta in *O.T.* 709ff. The queen⁹ has no faith in seer-craft, but at this

⁹ Jebb in a note on this passage refers to Eur, *H.F.* 1232 as an example of the orthodox view that the gods could not be polluted by any mortal. The general Greek idea of pollution is that one under a stigma of crime, etc., tainted his associates. But, if the altars of the gods could be so tainted, men would have no place where they might go to be cleansed of their impurity. Farnell says that these words of Creon are "a wild and revolting blasphemy intended to cause a shudder in the Athenian

point she avoids the direct impiety of calling the god of divination false, though she is less scrupulous about distinguishing between mortal and divine prophecy in ll. 857f. There follows the famous stasimon (863-910), which expresses a warning against the curse that results from unbelief; it is a protest¹⁰ of faith in the abiding power of heaven and was inserted perhaps as a reaction against the growing rationalism of the day.¹¹ But, even in this passage, there are some lines that express a bewildered skepticism on the part of the chorus; 'If the oracles be disproved, why should I do choral service'¹² (896) or 'why go in reverence to the shrines of the gods?' (885). Again: 'The old oracles about Laius are fading, and already men are setting them at naught; nowhere is Apollo glorified with honors; the worship of the gods is perishing' (ib. 906ff.). Jocasta, also expresses scornful skepticism of the efficacy of divine oracles (ib. 946f. and 977f.).¹³ At ll. 952ff. She bids the king consider the folly of worrying about oracles, as the former one have apparently been disproved. And Oedipus replies in the same skeptical spirit (964ff.), saying: 'The oracles, as they stand at least, have been swept away to hades and lie there by Polybus; they are worth nothing (971f). These statements are made dramatically, of course, and both speakers suffer dire punishment at the end of the play.

Relative to this cynicism and skepticism, is the attitude of fear of what the gods may send,—an important factor in religious feeling. That the gifts of the gods may be evil is constantly laid down by the poets.¹⁴ We find examples of this idea in Sophocles, in *O.T.* 1517f. and in frs. 646, 964. Indeed, the adjective 'divine' is more frequently applied to words of calamity, by Sophocles, than

audience and an instant conviction that the doom of such a man is sealed Jebb is here deaf to the call of the religious poet. I cannot do justice to the heinousness of his note The myriad-tongued evidence from the ritual and beliefs of the popular creed exclaims against error. The whole of Greek religious life was based on the opposite principle."

¹⁰ From one point of view the Greeks regarded their gods as severe and jealous deities whose anger might be aroused by any careless or presumptuous word; cf. e.g. *Aj.* 386, 423, 777, 1122; *El.* 127, 570, 830. *Ant.* 1350; fr. 516 *Aes. Sept.* 561.

¹¹ There seems to be a veiled reference to Pericles here (Cf. Plutarch. *Per* 6).

¹² Explained by the gloss 'to toil on behalf of the gods' in L and a number of other MMS.

¹³ It is true that she points her scorn at the prophets, not at the gods themselves. But the effect is the same.

¹⁴ Cf. Headlam "On editing Aeschylus," p. 89.

by other tragedians; e.g. *θεῖα νόσος* (*Aj.* 186, fr. 650, *Aj.* 611) *θεῖα παθήματα*. (*Ph.* 192f.)

In the *Electra* we find Clytemnestra regarding any evils forboded by dreams as aimed at her by her enemies under the guidance of Apollo (647ff.). A similiar attitude of fear is expressed in ll. 137 and 277 of this play, and also in fr. 637. Fear of rousing the wrath of heaven is very frequently expressed in Greek literature, and whatever might bring the displeasure of the gods is deprecated.¹⁵ Thus in the *Ajax*, a drama that centers around this idea, fear of evil sent from heaven is expressed by the chorus in their conjectures as to the cause of the divine wrath upon the hero. We find like expressions in the other plays also (cf. *Ant.* 614; O.T. 31; *Ph.* 776f). So, too, at the close of the *Electra*, fear of nemesis is expressed when Argisthus, hearing the report of Orestes' death, exclaims: *ὦ Ζεῦ, δέδορκα φάσμ' ἄνευ θεοῦ μένον πεπτωκός· εἰ δ' ἐπεστὶ νέμεσις οὐ λέγω.*

Yet there is hardly any trace of demonology in these plays. Conventional rites served to protect the Greeks from an overwhelming fear of evil spirits. Unquestionably some such a fear did exist, of course, among them; cf. *Tr.* 1235, where Hylus, referring to the suggestion that he marry the woman who has been the indirect cause of his parents' death, says that such a marriage would be made only by one possessed by evil spirits.

Moreover, the reference to the idea that inspiration is drawn from chewing a magic substance (fr. 897) may be interpreted as a special application of the general belief in demonic possession.

¹⁵ Cf. chap. on Fatalism, Nemesis, Pessimism.

III. PRAYER

A study of the prayers expressed in these plays gives us a deep insight into the relation represented here between the characters and their gods. No matter what their mythology or their occasional attitude toward heaven, the Greeks, when they prayed, conceived of their gods as more powerful than themselves. It is true that the prayers of the ancients were largely ceremonial,¹ and that they generally sought tangible goods from heaven. But in their frank expression of the conception of man's dependence on the gods, many of these prayers are truly religious in character. We will first discuss prayer *per se*, then prayers of vengeance and stereotyped curses, then oaths.

Prayer or a prayer-hymn formed a regular part of the sacrifice, to express the attitude and the particular motive of the worshiper. The motives for addressing the gods are, in general, quite apparent: fear of displeasure, hope of good will, gratitude for past favors, and shrewd expectations for more blessings. The thing sought is usually made quite clear. But in *El.* 655ff. the intentions of Clytemnestra are half-veiled in her prayer to Helios-Apollo, and secrecy is observed also in prayer to the Eumenides (cf. *O.C.* 131, 489).² Sometimes wreaths and incense symbolize an appeal to heaven as a substitute or emphasis of the spoken word (cf. *O.T.* 3, 916).

Of gratitude as a motive for prayer there are but few traces. It is true that in *O. C.* 1024, the words '*επειγωνται θεοις*' imply a vow of thanksgiving; while a similar reference to thanksgiving vows is made in *Ant.* 151 and *El.* 1377. Such, too, is the character of the prayer to Poseidon in fr. 371. But there are no definite prayers here that give direct expressions of gratitude for blessings bestowed. Prayers of glorification of the gods occur occasionally, chiefly in the form of choral hymns (e.g. *Aj.* 693ff.; *O.C.* 1044ff., *Tr.* 496ff.). The hyporcheme at the end of the *Antigone* (1115ff.) is one of the

¹ Cf. G. J. Lang "Roman prayer and its relation to ethics"—*Cl. Phil.* VI (1911) p. 196.

² Secrecy in prayer is condemned by Plut. *de def. oracul.* VII 413f., Seneca *Ep.* 105, Macrob. *Sat.* I 76

best examples we have of such combinations of hymn and prayer, and this passage gives a clear idea of the Greek mind in the attitude of devotion. We find no prayer, however, that expresses adoration, pure and simple.³

Prayers for forgiveness of sin are likewise rarely found. In the ceremonial prayer to the Eumenides in *O.C.* 484, there is no consciousness of sin, and so no real repentance expressed. For the pollution, incurred by unwittingly trespassing upon the sanctity of their grove, is purely external.

By far the greatest number of the prayers, expressed or implied, are supplications. Thus at the opening of the *Oedpus Tyrannus* we find the Thebans appealing to the compassion of their gods. The chorus also (*ib.* 1566ff.) beseeches the nether powers to be merciful to the aged Oedipus at his death. Likewise in *Tr.* 94ff. the chorus prays to Helios to send release from fear. Both Clytemnestra (*El.* 635ff.) and her daughter (*ib.* 1376ff.) beg for divine protection and aid. Electra, indeed, has often in the past prayed 'with importunate hand' that her hopes be accomplished (*ib.* 1377f.). Deianira, too, offers many prayers to the gods for blessing and protection (*ib.* 47f.). Neoptolemus prays for the relief of Philoctetes (*Ph.* 462), for a safe departure (*ib.* 528), and for a prosperous voyage (*ib.* 779). A stereotyped prayer for good fortune is the form into which a farewell compliment often naturally falls. Sometimes a greeting is a solemn and heartfelt prayer of blessing (cf. *O.C.* 1435, 1444f.). Oedipus prays that justice and all the gods be gracious to those citizens who comply with the orders of his proclamation (*O.T.* 1275). Later, in expressing his horror of the oracle about his fate, he prays to the Holy Reverence of the gods to prevent its fulfillment (*ib.* 830f.). Shortly thereafter comes the great prayer for purity in word and deed (*ib.* 869-910); for the chorus is here moved to deprecate the queen's irreverence and arrogance towards things divine.

Rationalistic⁴ attitude toward prayer is shown occasionally by these characters, as in *Ant.* 1337. Philoctetes, also, when smarting under a severe attack of pain, expresses skepticism in regard to the efficacy of prayer (*Ph.* 782), later, however, he sees that his prayers have not been futile, and the last thing that he and the others do

³ Cf. Daremberg Saglio 1. 81ff, s. v. adoratis.

⁴ Cf. Chap. on attitude towards the gods.

before setting sail for Troy is to pray (*ib.* 1469ff.). Answer to prayer appears also in the kindly reception by Theseus of Oedipus and his daughter (*O.C.* 551ff.). At the crisis of his misfortune Ajax, too, in spite of his despair and disgrace, shows an abiding faith in prayer (*Aj.* 684ff.). Moreover, when a mysterious rumor informs all the Greeks in the camp that he has died, this seems to be an immediate answer to his appeal to Zeus (*ib.* 824, cf. 978). The burial of the hero forms a natural sequence to this appeal (*ib.* 1316ff.).

The choice of the deity to whom the prayer was offered depended upon the one who was nearest,—in his sphere of interest, in personal ties, or in the location of his altar, etc.⁵ Very many of prayers in these plays are addressed to Zeus.⁶ In the *Ajax*, e.g., the chorus prays to Zeus to check the evil report about the hero that is spreading among the Argives (186f.). And at 824ff. we find the last prayer of Ajax: he first prays that Zeus, as the highest god and also as the founder of his home, protect his abode from dishonor; the hero then asks Hermes, guardian of souls, to grant him a favorable passage to the shades below; and, finally, he entreats the Erinyes to avenge his death. Again, we find a prayer for help from misfortune, in *O.T.* 202, where Zeus is asked to slay Ares, the plague. Moreover in *O.C.* 642 Oedipus shows his gratitude to the Athenians by a prayer that Zeus may bless them. This lord of all and god of the skies is asked in *Ajax* 707. to send fair days once more. Furthermore, the choral song in *O.T.* 151ff., a highly finished work of imaginative art, is in the form of a prayer of glorification and supplication, addressed to Zeus, Athena, Apollo, and Artemis.

At 80f. of this play Apollo is asked to send a favorable answer to the oracle; while the hope for better fortune, expressed by the priest at l. 149f., is an indirect prayer to the god: Φοῖβος δ' ὁ πέμψας τάσδε μάντεις ἄμα / σωτήρ θ' ἵκοιτο καὶ νόσου πανστήριος.. Clytemnestra likewise appeals to Apollo for help (*El.* 637 ff.). This god also is importuned by Electra to grant success to the scheme of vengeance and thus testify to the world that piety is rewarded by the gods (*ib.* 1376 ff.): "Αναξ Ἀπολλον, Ἰλεως αὐτοῦν κλίνε / ἐμοῦ τε πρὸς τούτοισιν, ἢ σε πολλὰ δὴ / ἀφ' ὃν ἔχοιμι λιπαρεῖ προύστην χερί.

⁵ Cf. Fairbanks, Gk. Relig., p. 84.

⁶ Yet J. A. Barton ("The Religions of the World," U. of Chicago Press, 1917, p. 255) says, "In the plays of Sophocles no one god overshadows the rest of the pantheon." For further refutation of this statement, cf. the chapter on Zeus.

Here, as well as in Orestes' prayer (*ib.* 67ff.), the suppliant brings forward reasons why the request for divine aid should be granted by heaven. Electra's argument is that Apollo should bestow favor upon her because of her devotion; i.e. her attitude may be expressed, more or less, by the formula 'Do ut des' (*ib.* 1382f.). Her attitude, however, is not that of a formal partner in a business contract for in her passionate cry—*αἰτῶ, προπίτνω, λισσομαι, γενοῦ πρόφρων*—a note of adoration is heard. Orestes, on his part reasons with the gods, being the real leader of his mission, ought to honor his request (*ib.* 69f.).

Furthermore prayers are often addressed to the Chthonic and to ancestral gods, especially by the dying, as in *Aj.* 831, *Ant.* 936ff., *O.C.* 84ff.⁷ In the final prayer of Ajax⁸ the use of the term *ἄρκεσον* (*A*: 824) is quite significant, marking, as it does, the conversion of this rough hero to a devout recognition of the supreme potency of the gods; for that is the very term used in his former refusal to appeal for divine help.⁹ We should also notice that in this prayer a deliberate feeling for ritual propriety is expressed in his words: *σὺ πρῶτος, καὶ Ζεῦ, καὶ γὰρ εἰκός, ἄρκεσον* (*I.* 824).

But of all the prayers and hymns¹⁰ to nature in Sophocles, the chorus in praise of Colonus deserves first mention (*O.C.* 688ff.). Unfortunately the passage is too long for us to give it in full, and the proper effect cannot be gained by partial quotation. In this, as in other addresses to the forces of nature, a deep religious note is struck by the poet.

Several prayers of a similar nature occur in the *Ajax*. In his utter despair, the hero is represented as calling to the powers of darkness to seize him and to bear him away to the underworld (*Aj.* 394ff.). Like Antigone (*Ant.* 787f.; *O.C.* 828f.),¹¹ he has lost hope of any aid in this life, and therefore (ll. 846ff.) he prays that the sun may reveal his fate to his aged father, Telamon. Later (ll. 856ff.) in a pathetic speech like that of Oedipus (*O.T.* 1183)¹² and of Antigone (*Ant.* 809ff.) Ajax once more addresses the light. Finally, he prays to his native land, to neighboring Athens, and

⁷ Aes. 69; *Cho.* 1ff. 124, 139, 479; Eum. 115.

⁸ On the prayers of the dying to chthonic gods, cf. Val. Max. 11. 6.6; Silins VII 140.

⁹ This point is suggested by W. W. Lloyd J.H.S. V 289

¹⁰ Cf. R. Wunch in Pauly-Wissowa, s. v. *Hymnos*

¹¹ Cf. the attitude of Prometheus in Aes. *P.V.* 561.

¹² Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 206, *Hipp.* 57, *Hec.* 411.

to the springs and rivers of Troy (ll. 859ff.). Here, again, we are reminded of passages in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* and in the *Antigone*.

In the *Electra*, Orestes prays to his ancestral home and to the gods of his land (ll. 66ff.). Heracles also addresses the neighboring land and bids it behold his wrongs (*Tr.* 994). Philoctetes makes a similar appeal to the spirit of nature around him,—the Lemnian land, the lakes, and the volcanic power of the mountain (*Ph.* 1081ff.). Again, at ll. 1040f., the hero calls upon his native land to avenge his wrongs. Throughout this entire play, the appeal to nature is very strong and impressive; e.g. at ll. 827-832 there is a beautiful prayer to sleep,—‘The lord that knows not pain or grief, who comes with power to heal.’ In fr. 752 we are likewise impressed by the simple appeal for pity to Helios, god of sunlight: “*Ηλι, οἰκτίροις ἐμέ*.

In connections with prayers of appeal, *λιτσημαί* frequently appears (e.g. *El.* 1380). The term *ἀράομαι* also is often used, but rarely in a good sense. In *Aj.* 509, to be sure, we find it in the reference to the prayer of a mother for the return of her son from war. So, too, this word expresses the prayer of a brother for his sisters’ happiness (*O.C.* 1444). But usually, as in *Ant.* 427, this word is employed in the expression of imprecations.

Imprecations or prayers for vengeance appear quite frequently in Sophocles. In *El.* 71f. e.g. Orestes prays that he may accomplish his plan of avenging his father’s murder. Electra, too, often utters such prayers (*ib.* 110ff. 792, 1376ff.). The chorus sympathize with her and cry: *ὅ τάσδε πορῶν / δλοιτ’, εἴ μοι θέμις αὐδᾶν*. Here, as in fr. 855, *Ph.* 961 and *Tr.* 809, the prayer for vengeance, we note, is piously qualified.¹³ In the *Trachinia* passage, this hesitating qualification, ‘if it be right’ is made only for a moment; for in the following lines the justice of the demand for vengeance is reasserted. In a similiar bitter and solemn prayer for the ruin of his enemy, Ajax cries: ‘May I see him suffer even as I suffer’ (*Aj.* 384; cf. *ib.* 335ff. and 388ff.). Teucer also prays that his enemies be punished by the gods for their ruthless attitude towards his brother (*ib.* 1390ff.). And Hylus, in his prayer for vengeance to Dike and Erinyes (*Tr.* 809f.), deliberately gives his wish the solemn form of an imprecation by adding the word ‘I pray.’ Philoctetes, too, calls to the gods for vengeance: *ὅι ’Ολύμπιοι θεοί / δοῖεν ποτ’ αὐτοῦς ἀντίποιν’ ἔμοῦ παθεῖν* (*Ph.* 315 ff.). Moreover, part of the curse called down upon

¹³ Cf. Eur. *H.F.* 141, for a similiar hesitation in prayer for vengeance

his son by Oedipus takes the form of a prayer to the gods for vengeance (*O.C.* 1389-1393).

The study of curses belongs more to the subject of magic, perhaps, than that of religion proper; i.e. a curse may be looked upon as an automatic force, operating without divine aid.¹⁴ Thus we find that curses are invoked as allies by Oedipus (*O.C.* 1375f.); i.e. he summons his own curses to come to his aid against his foes. Here we find a transition from the view in *O.T.* 418 and in *Tr.* 1202 and 1239f.,—where the imprecation in an objective sense is itself the agent of retribution—to that expressed in *El.* 111.—where the curse is distinguished from the power that called it forth. There is this general tendency for the principle of curses to be considered an intrinsically independent emotional force. Often, indeed, a curse is represented as a personified being.—an Eriny or an Ara.

Curses are not only non-moral forces but, in many cases, a positive hindrance to morality. Oedipus e.g. leaves behind him a curse as well as a blessing. With solemn and elaborate fullness, his words are uttered and repeated (*O.C.* 425ff., 1370ff.). Now, unless their full force were arrested in some special way, curses were thought to bring annihilation upon the one devoted and upon all his descendants. From this dread effect of his father's prayer, Polyneices sees no possible escape; he asks only the grace of an honorable burial (*ib.* 1404, 1409ff., 1432ff.). It is this belief in the power of a curse that renders the curse of a parent upon a child so tragic.¹⁵ However much Sophocles may palliate this fact, he cannot moralize the curse of a father upon his children. The great expedition against Thebes is foredoomed by the energy of this curse (*ib.* 421ff.) and the whole land is likewise accursed (*ib.* 787f.); all counter supplications are futile (*ib.* 1380). Philoctetes is likewise implacable (cf. *Ph.* 279, 791ff., 961). Most bitter of all are his curses upon the Greek leaders and especially upon Odysseus (e.g. 1019, 1035). The hero feels that all his suffering would be forgotten if only his enemies be destroyed (cf. 1041ff.). At l. 1200 he curses Ilium and the men before its walls, and at 1285f. he again calls down a curse upon them all.

¹⁴ Cf. Farnell: *Higher Aspects of Gr. Religion*. p. 51f. Curses and prayers of blessing are various threads of magico-religious force.

¹⁵ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 912; Eur. *Phoen.* 624ff., *Hipp.* 1167. Such personifications of curses appear likewise in the *Avesta*.

In the *Antigone* the heroine cries out in execration of her enemies, especially of those who have undone her work of burial (428). Again at 927f. she curses her judges, expressing her hope that they 'may suffer as they do.' Moreover, I. 1305 Eurydice is said to have cursed her husband with her dying breath.¹⁶ We hear of this indirectly, however, and the words *σοὶ κακὰς / πράξεις ἐφυμνησασα* suggest prophecy rather than a curse. As in this instance we find a wife cursing her husband and above (*O.C.* 787f.) a father cursing his sons, so in the *Trachiniae* we find a son cursing his mother (819f.). In strong passion he repudiates her claims of parenthood and ironically expresses the hope that she may experience the same 'pleasure' that she has caused his father. Heracles also curses his wife, Deianira, for the agony she has brought upon him (*ib.* 1039f.).

In the *Ajax* the chorus invoke evil upon the man who taught the Greeks the art of war (1192ff.).¹⁷ Likewise in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the chorus call down an evil fate upon him who transgresses the law of heaven (883ff.), and at ll. 663ff., vehemently disclaiming any wish to injure the king, they say that death in utter loneliness ought to be the reward of such base ingratitude. Oedipus too calls down a curse upon the murderer¹⁸ of Laius and proclaims the guilty one an outcast (*ib.* 246ff.). The king's words are spoken with terrible earnestness and are seemingly irrevocable, even when the curse is found to apply to himself (*ib.* 1182ff.).¹⁹ Sometimes, as in *Tr.* 1189, a conditional curse is put in the form of an oath. One form of the direct influence of religion upon ethics is the additional sanction given by an oath to an assertion or a promise. The oath had a sacred character among the ancient Greeks and insult to the sanctity of this institution was not made with impunity.²⁰ Among them the oath was a specially revered²¹ and important form of invocation, and their deep respect for what was spoken under

¹⁶ The curse or blessing of the dying man was naturally looked upon as especially potent.

¹⁷ Elsewhere in literature we frequently notice this and similar stereotyped curses.

¹⁸ Does not exactly mean 'imprecate,' but is often so used in passages that imply imprecation.

¹⁹ Curses against oneself are apparently the strongest form of asseveration; cf. *O.T.* 644, 661.

²⁰ Cf. Aristot. *Rhet. III.* XV, Aristoph. *Acharn.* 398f., *Thesm.* 275f., *Ran.* 102, 1471, on the attack upon Eur. for making a slighting reference to the sanctity of an oath. (*Hipp.* 612).

²¹ Cf. Aristot. *Metaph.* I. 3. 983b.

oath is frequently attested by their literature and their inscriptions. We moderns are too apt to think of an oath as a special ceremony but loosely connected with religion.²²

An examination of the oaths here expressed reveals the fact that more or less stereotyped appeals to superior sanction in verification of a statement and in prayers to the gods as witnesses of wrong are quite common in Greek tragedy.²³ Some seventy-five examples occur in the works of Sophocles. Thus Hylus solemnly bids his father repeat his request in regard to the marriage with Iole, and Heracles does so with an appeal to the gods as witnesses (*Tr.* 1247f.). Neoptolemus speaks with similar earnestness when trying to explain matters to Philoctetes (*Ph.* 1324). Oedipus likewise calls the gods to witness the nature of his deeds (*O.C.* 522). An appeal under oath usually commands deep respect (cf. *O.T.* 656). Ajax, however, rejects such an appeal (*Aj.* 590ff.), repudiating the idea that, as a debtor to heaven, he should reverence any oath to the gods.²⁴ But his impiety is repudiated by Tecmessa (*ib.* 591ff.).

Some oaths appear somewhat stereotyped in form and serve chiefly to mark the emotion of the speaker. Thus Odysseus, when he sees that his plans are failing (*Ph.* 1293), cries out excitedly, 'Ye gods, my witnesses' ($\omega\theta\epsilon\omega\lambda\kappa\nu\sigma\tau\rho\epsilon\sigma$) 'By the gods' ($\pi\rho\delta\omega\theta\epsilon\omega\lambda\kappa\nu$)²⁵ a very common form of asseveration, occurs more than forty times in Sophocles. This oath is occasionally (*Ant.* 839, *O.C.* 756, *Ph.* 933) strengthened by adding the epithet 'ancestral' ($\pi\alpha\tau\rho\omega\omega\nu$).

Peculiarly strong and appealing is the form adjuration in *El.* 411 and fr. 521. In most languages such oaths are found. Those in the form of a phrase (e.g. 'by Zeus') imply that the god is appealed to as a helper or guarantor; while the more stereotyped swearing

²⁵ In *Ph.* 6 37. Neoptolemus swears by the bow as though it were divine.

²² Cf. J. E. Harrison J.H.S. XIX. 231.

²³ Tylor (*Encyc. Br.* XIV 939 s.v. oath) defines oath as 'an assvoration or promise made under non-human penalty or sanction.' Such assvortations, usually in the form of an appeal to heaven as witness, are found among all races. Westermarck (Moral ideas II 113) calls an oath a conditional self-imprecation, . . ." a curse by which a person calls down upon himself some evil in the event of what he says not being true." An oath is, then, fundamentally a curse, whether the penalty involved is formally expressed or merely implied. Furthermore we may here call to mind also that the ordeal (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 264f.) is really just a special concrete application of an oath involving self-imprecation, which it seeks to give reality by putting to a practical test the innocence or guilt of the person involved.

²⁴ Ajax here implies that whatever sin he may have committed against heaven has been more than atoned for by the cruelty of the goddess Athena to him. cf. Thuc. 7.77.

expressions (e.g. O, ye gods!) are often only vague appeals or just exclamations.²⁵ Thus the expression ‘by Zeus’ is used both as a real address (*Aj.* 388, 709, 824; *Tr.* 200, 303; *O.T.* 739; *O.C.* 143, 742, 1085), and also as a mere exclamation, denoting astonishment, horror, etc. (*Ph.* 908, 1139; *El.* 766, 1466; *O.C.* 221, 310, 1456, 1471). The common affirmation ‘yes, by Zeus,’ an obvious colloquialism,²⁶ is found only once, and then in the *Ichneutae*, a satyr-play (fr. 314, l. 112).

Zeus is also invoked in solemn form in *Ph.* 1289. In *Aj.* 492 he is appealed to as the guardian of the family, and in *Ph.* 484 as the protector of supplicants. Heracles (*Tr.* 1185f.) and Creon too (*Ant.* 184, 304f., 758) appeal to Zeus. This mighty god is invoked also by the chorus in earnest affirmation in fr. 389f. where he is called ‘bringer of surcease from sorrow’.

The other deities whose sanction is invoked are Artemis (*El.* 627, 1239), Themis (*ib.* 1064), the gods of Sparta (frs. 956, 957), and those of Argus (fr. 957). The Eurotus river or river-god is likewise invoked by oath (fr. 559). In *Ph.* 6, 37²⁶ Neoptolemus swears by the bow as though it were divine. Tekmessa makes her appeal for pity *πρός τ' ἐφεστίου Διὸς/εἰνῆς τε τῆς σῆς, ὃ συνηλλάχθης ἐμοὶ*.

Antigone also mentions the marriage couch in an appeal for pity (*O.C.* 250). Similar oaths by the sanctities of the home are found in *Ph.* 468f., *El.* 881, *ib.* 1208, and *Ajax* 492.

The binding force of an oath is testified to quite often in these plays (*Tr.* 255, 1186, 1385; *Ant.* 369; *Ph.* 941, 1369, 1398; *O.T.* 646, 650, 1510; *O.C.* 227, 648ff., 1149, 1508f., 1637). Heracles requires his son to swear an oath in addition to his word of honor (*Tr.* 1185), and, as a further sanction, to state implicitly the penalty invoked in case this oath be broken (*ib.* 1189). The false oath suggested by Orestes (*El.* 47) would be excused by the trickery which Apollo had prescribed (*ib.* 37). But, as a matter of fact, no such oath is taken.

²⁵ Neoptolemus here regards the bow as divine, not so much because it is invincible, as because it had belonged to Heracles. So, too, the Arcadian chief Parthenopaeus swears by his spear-head (*Aes. Theb.* 529).

IV. ALTARS AND SHRINES

While Greek religious service might be held anywhere, certain places naturally came to be regarded as especially pleasing to the gods. Sacrifices and prayers offered in such spots were thought to be more likely to attract the attention of heaven. It is a noteworthy fact, indeed, that Sophocles, as compared with Aeschylus and Euripides, makes little mention of the temples and other monuments of his day. We find that great reverence is shown towards altars, shrines, and other consecrated things by the characters in his plays. ‘Accursed be he who reverences not the shrine of the gods,’ exclaims the chorus in *O.T.* 884f. These Thebans, when overwhelmed with grief and terror at the havoc wrought by the pestilence, have recourse to the gods and stand as supplicants before the altars (*ib.* 20, 182ff.). In the early moments of his blindness Oedipus recalls the sacred statues which he will never see again (*ib.* 1378f.). An enclosure sacred to the gods was considered a place to be kept clean of impurities, and not encroached¹ upon in any way (*Tr.* 200.). Desecration of temples was considered impiety to the gods (*Ant.* 199f.).

Asylum was a privilege especially adhering to the altars and temples, and for anyone to molest a suppliant at a shrine was thought to be an insult to the gods (*ib.* 922).² Since Athens was considered preëminently pious (*O.C.* 260, 1125ff.), Oedipus, as a suppliant, makes an appeal to the natives to pay the gods a tribute of practical piety by not insisting too strictly upon the sanctity of the sacred grove (*ib.* 277f.). Theseus immediately considers his cause favorably and honors Oedipus as a devoted suppliant (*ib.* 634). Thereafter, the aged hero is regarded as an object of reverence (cf. e.g. l. 286),—*ἴερος εὐσεβῆς τε*,— as one following the behests of Apollo and also as one under the protection of the Eumenides, Polyneices, in turn, claims the privileges of a suppliant (*ib.* 1156, 1278, 1285f.). Both here and *ib.* 1171 *προστάτης* means *ἰκέτης*, *προσεστή-*

¹ Cf. Eur. Hipp. 73, Stengel, Kultusalt. 18f, Schömann-Lips. 11 201ff.

² On the right of asylia cf. Eur. Ion 1212ff. and article by Caillemer, s.v. *asylia*, in Daremberg-Saglio.

κώς τῷ βωμῷ (one who has taken his stand, as a suppliant, by the altar') as the schol. explains. Elsewhere the term signifies 'protector' (e.g. *Tr.* 209, *O.T.* 303, 411, 882). In a similar way *προστρόπαιος* is used of both the suppliant (*Ph.* 930) and the protector of the injured. 'The suppliant posture is no small thing' (*ib.* 1163 cf. *ib.* 1179). Violation of a pledge to a suppliant is called an impious deed (*ib.* 283).

Cult statues are referred to in the plays of Sophocles as having a peculiarly sacred meaning. The *ἔδη* mentioned in *O.T.* 886 and *El.* 1374 are merely the images of the gods; but this word connotes temples or holy places wherein the images were set up as objects of worship. Images usually were erected on altars, which in turn were raised on a stepped dais base (cf. *Ant.* 854). In fr. 1025 the four materials used for statues of the gods are mentioned: stone, bronze, gold, and ivory gods are mentioned (*εἰκ λίθων ἢ χαλκέων ἢ χρυσοτεύκτων ἢ / ἐλαφαντίγων τύπους*). In *O.T.* 184 the mound or steps of an altar is referred to,³ while the raised pedestal is mentioned in fr. 38 as *βωμιαῖον ἐσχάρας βάθρον*.⁴

When Thebes is saved from the invaders, the citizens hasten to the temple (cf. *Ant.* 151) and all the altars and shrines of the city are filled with sacrificial gifts (*ib.* 1006). Private altars of the hearth, as well as public places of worship, are said to have been tainted by the unburied corpse of Polyheices (*ib.* 1016); i.e. the gods are offended. The altars at the hearth of Agamemnon's palace are referred to in *El.* 169f., and those within the home of Heracles are mentioned in *Tr.* 904). It is upon one of these that Deianira casts herself and cries that the gods have deserted her. Likewise it is the altar of Zeus, the guardian of the household, that is the scene of Eurydice's suicide (*Ant.* 1301).⁵

A guardian altar of the home is mentioned in (fr. 370). This *ἀγνεύεις βωμός* (*ib.*) usually stood before the house and was commonly

³ We retain the reading of L. This word (*aktan*) seems to be used with the possible implication that the altar affords protection from the sea of troubles. (cf. Aes. Pers. 433 and Verrall's n. on Aes. cho. 722). However this common figurative meaning ('shore'), which is not altogether obscured here, is not the original, but the specialized meaning of the word. (Cf. e.g. *Ant.* 1133 and Wilamowitz, Sidgwick, and Tucker on Aes. *Cho.* 722.)

⁴ This is Cambell's conjecture; Meineke supplied *Lithon. Bomiae escharai* signify sculptured altars. cf. Stephen Byz. 191.8 ammonius apud Harpocr., s.v. *bomos* and *eschara*, Phot. lex. 233, school. Eur. *Phoen.* 274, Reisch in Pauly-Wiss. VI 614ff, Michaelis *Arch. Zeitg.* 67.9 and Loewy in *Jahrb. D. Arch. Inst.* 11 87.

⁵ Cf. Eur. *Phoen.* 274, Pol. 4.123, Reisch, Pauly-Wiss. 1 910ff. Harrison (them. 406ff.) treats the *aguieus* as a fertility emblem.

represented on the stage (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 1006 *El.* 634, 1376; *O.T.* 16, 886, 919, *Tr.* 238, 754, 904, 993.). The altar in fr. 370 is described as 'bright with fire, steaming with richness of myrrh, barbarian gifts.'⁶

Perhaps another descriptive expression regarding temples is employed in *O.T.* 20 where the word *διπλοῖς* ('two-fold') may possibly refer to a temple with two cellas and two cults.⁷ Moreover in *Ant.* 285 the temples are said to be surrounded with pillars. This description marks their splendor and stateliness.

In *Tr.* 200, 436, and 1191, Mount Oeta is referred to as a precinct sacred to Zeus. Mount Athos in Thrace is honored as a Sanctuary of Zeus (cf. fr. 237). A sacred precinct of Hera is mentioned in fr. 27⁸ and in *El.* 8 there is a reference to the oldest and greatest of the Argive shrines,⁹ the famous temple of Hera. Sophocles refers likewise to other sacred spots in Argos;—the agora of Apollo,¹⁰ and the sacred grove of Io (*ib.* 5ff.). In the *Oedipus Coloneus* reference is made to several altars or shrines that were in or near the Academy: that of Prometheus (55f.), that of the muses (691f.), that of Zeus Morios (705), and that of Athena, (706). Those at Colonus naturally are referred to often in this play: that of Poseidon (54f., 888f., 1158), of Colonus (54), of Aphrodite (692), of Athena Hippia,¹¹ (1069), of Thesus (1593), of the Eumenides (40, etc.). The words here in (*O.C.* 898) may refer to the associated worship of Athena Hippia and Poseidon Hippios (cf. *ib.* 1069ff.), or the plural may be simply poetical and apply just to the altar of Poseidon. Moreover l. 1600 may, as the scholiast notes, refer to the shrine of Demeter Chloe on the south-west slope of the Acropolis. In *O.T.* 19ff. and 912, the public altars of the gods of the agora are referred to; while the two altars of Pallas are mentioned in l. 20. Furthermore, we find in l. 899 a reference to the temple of Apollo at Abae.¹²

⁶ Cf. description of the temples in Eur. *Andr.* 1019 and *I.T.* 406.

⁷ Such as the Erechtheum. cf. Huddleston *Attitude of the Gk. Tragedians toward Art*, p. 34.

⁸ Jebb considers this a specific reference to the Argive Heraeum.

⁹ Cf. Paus. 2-17.

¹⁰ Very probably the temple of Apollo Lukeios was on the north side of this agora; cf. Frazer's Paus 2. 19.3.

¹¹ Cf. Paus. 10.35lf., Hdt. 8.33.

¹² This word (*hagnos*) may be used by the poets either like *hieros* (e.g. Eur. *Andr.* 253) or, as here, like *hosias*.

The sacred grove at Colonus is variously denoted: ἄλσος (*O.C.* 126), τέμενος (*ib.* 136), ἔδρα (*ib.* 36), χῶρον οὐχ ἄγνον πατεῖν (*ib.* 37), χῶρος ἵερός¹³ (*ib.* 16). These inviolable shrines are honored, not only in word, but in repeated association with the place ($\tauῇ \xiνονυσίᾳ πλέον$); i.e., the charm of the holy precinct grows upon those who frequent it. The undisturbed sanctity of the shrine is revealed in the presence there of many nightingales, thick shrubbery, olive and laurel trees (*ib.* 17f.). Not only the grove of the Eumenides, but the whole neighboring region, including the altar of Poseidon (*ib.* 888, 898), and the cavern nearby (*ib.* 1056f.), is considered sacred (*ib.* 54). This cavern, the brazen-footed approach to the underworld (*ib.* 57) in turn is said to be the 'stay Athens' (*ib.* 58).

Sometimes an attendant is mentioned as having charge of a shrine. At the Colonus, e.g., there was such an attendant who, among other things, always kept the craters ready for the use of worshippers near the spring (*ib.* 506).¹⁴ In charge of the sacred precinct of Chryse was a sacred serpent, whose sting caused Philoctetes ten years of suffering¹⁵ (*Ph.* 265ff.). The whole city of Thebes is called a sacred place (*Ant.* 843), for it is regarded as sacred to Dionysus and to the other gods of that land (cf. 154, 1135). Furthermore the revered Areopagus, whatever may have been the origin of its name, in Sophocles, at least, is considered sacred to Ares (*O.C.* 947).

¹³ This word properly means an enclosure without any roofed building, although it is sometimes used, in a general way, for 'shrine' (e.g. Eur. *Ion* 300, *Rhes.* 501).

¹⁴ The word used for the guardian-attendant at the shrine is *eποίκος* signifying, 'One who dwells *close to*', hardly one who dwells *on* 'this uninhabitable' grove (*O.C.* 39, 506). Such is Jebb's interpretation. There is, however, testimony elsewhere in Gk. literature to the fact that sometimes the guardians of sacred precincts dwelt within the enclosure; e.g. *Od.* 9.200. Paus. 10.34.7.

¹⁵ The epic version mentions only a destructive water-serpent 11.2.723. Sophocles, however, adds color to the story and enhances its mysterious significance by delineating the serpent as a guardian of the shrine.

V. RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES IN GENERAL

Frequent reference is made in Sophocles to the importance of ritual in the worship of the gods. In praising Athens as 'most pius' (*O.C.* 260) Oedipus says: 'if any land knows how to reverence the gods with due rites, this land excels therein' (*ib.* 1006f.). So large a factor in the life of the Greeks, indeed, was a religious ceremony, that, when the king's proclamation against the murder of Laius bars him from participation in lustral rites, sacrifice, and prayer (*O.T.* 239f.), this is construed as precluding the culprit from all ordinary human association.

When sacrifice was offered by members of a household (*El.* 270), or of a clan (fr. 126) lustral water was sprinkled upon the company. This sprinkling of consecrated water was equivalent to admitting those present into religious fellowship.¹ Religious festivals were land-marks of the calendar (*Ant.* 607) and were closely bound up with Greek family life (*O.T.* 1489ff.). In fr. 844 all those concerned, the artisans, are urged to be present at the worship in honor of Athena Ergane.² This passage has been generally connected with the festival of the *χαλκεῖα*, which was originally a *έορτή δημοταλῆς*, but later a festival especially for artisans. Even women were allowed to participate in these public ceremonies; the convention that enforced privacy upon them was usually relaxed then (*El.* 911).³ A festival naturally was an occasion for gala attire.⁴ Thus Deianira says that the robe she sent her husband had been saved for him to wear at some sacred festival, 'that he should be a bright votary in this bright robe' (*Tr.* 608ff.).

In fr. 97, there seems to be a reference to the Pan-Ionic festival of the Ephesia.⁵ Another festival is mentioned in fr. 437, where

¹ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 656, *Ag.* 1039.

² Suid. s.v., Pollux 7.105, and the notes of Herman, Jebb, and Pearson on this fragment.

³ Cf. Ar. *Thesm.* 91f., 184ff., *Ran.* 157 and 444ff., *Plut.* 1013, eccl. 18.59 *Acharn.* 240f. 262, *Lys.* 2 and schol.; Lysias 1.20; H.W. Haley, *Harv. Stud.* I. 165ff.

⁴ Cf. Pollux I. 25.

⁵ If so, the reference is an anachronism; cf. Thuc. 3.104 Step. Byz. p. 289.19 records this word as occurring in the *Alexander* of Sophocles.

the words *νυμφικὸν Ελύμνιον* refer to the rite of *ἱερὸς γάμος*, or sacred intercourse, at the Elumnon, as also at the Euboean Ocha.⁶ A reference is found in *O.C.* 1048 to the annual celebration of the great Eleusinia. This festival was introduced by an evening procession, a reference to which is made by the words *λύμνιον ἀκταῖς* (*ib.* 1049). The ceremonies are said to be preserved with great mystery and care (*ib.* 1050),⁷ to be quite cosmopolitan in character (*Ant.* 1120), and to be very efficacious in securing future joys and privileges for the initiated (*fr.* 753).⁸ During the observance of these rites, 'flowers were scattered on the plain for the initiated' (*fr.* 891).

These mysteries had close connection with the cult of Dionysus.⁹ Mystic festivals in this god's honor were held by night (*El.* 1122ff., *Ant.* 1151). Such an all-night festival was a joyous one;¹⁰ and so there is pathetic irony in the bitter speech where Electra uses the word *πάννυχις* to designate her own sad vigils.¹¹ (*El.* 92f.) As at the Panathenaea,¹² songs and dances were a leading feature of the all-night festival of Dionysus (*Ant.* 1145 ff.).¹³ The wild cries of the Maenads in these rites are often referred to (*ib.* 992, 1128, 1151; *O.T.* 212; *O.C.* 680). They are imitated by the chorus in *Tr.* 218, where mention is made of the flute, whose music was supposed to inspire enthusiasm,¹⁴ particularly religious enthusiasm in connection with the worship of Dionysus.

In these Dionysiac revels, as well as in other ritual, music and dancing played an important part. Hymns of worship are frequently mentioned in Sophocles (e.g. *frs.* 468, 490). In their joy over the supposed recovery of their chief, the chorus in the *Ajax* perform a hyporcheme and express the desire that their dances be as joyous

⁶ Cf. Step. Byz. 362.16, Frazer *G.B.* I. 228 and Gruppe 1134 for a list of the places where this cult was established.

⁷ Cf. Aes. *frs.* 376, 377; Eur. *Hipp.* 25.

⁸ Cf. Plat. *Phaedo* 69c, Isoc. *Panegyr.* 28. Pind. *fr.* 102. It is noteworthy that Pindar, as well as Sophocles, speaks of the Eleusinian mysteries as being seen (*idon, derchthentes*). O. Kern (*Eleusin. Beitr.*, p. 11) shows that Eleusinian mystery play supplied Sophocles with the description of the magic car in *fr.* 596.

⁹ Cf. Chap. on Dionysus.

¹⁰ Cf. Ar. *Ran.* 445.

¹¹ Cf. Aes. *P.V.* 1045.

¹² Cf. Eur. *Heracl.* 781ff.

¹³ Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 485, etc.

¹⁴ Cf. Eur. *H.F.* 871.

as were held in honor of Dionysus at Nysa or Crissus (693ff.). In the *Trachiniae*, likewise, the chorus expresses delight at good news in this fashion (205ff.). Not only were choral dances especially characteristic of Dionysiac worship (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 1152f., fr. incert 778), but they were also connected with the cult of Apollo (*O.T.* 1097, *Tr.* 205ff., *Aj.* 703ff.), and of other gods (*ib.* 694ff.).¹⁵ Indeed the chorus was so essential an element of Greek religious service that the question ‘Why should I take part in the chorus?’ (*τι δεῖ με χορεύειν*)¹⁶ (*O.T.* 896) really suggests skepticism about the value of maintaining the rites of divine worship in general (cf. *ib.* 1095).

Another feature often mentioned in connection with Dionysiac worship is that of crowning with ivy (cf. mention of ivy in *Ant.* 826, 1132; *O.C.* 674; *Tr.* 218). This in fact was as common an incident in the festivals of Dionysus as was the crowning with laurel in the worship of Apollo (cf. *Ph.* 1420, *Tr.* 178; *O.T.* 83). In the *O.T.* and *Tr* passages, laurel is a symbol of victory. The Pythian games, at which laurel was regularly used, are mentioned in *El.* 49 and 681ff.¹⁷

Aside from the treatment of the theme of the *Antigone*, the best illustration in Sophocles of the Greek attitude towards ritual is furnished by the zeal of the chorus in *O.C.* 466ff. and by the scrupulous directions Oedipus received from them as to the means whereby he may atone for trespass on a holy precinct.¹⁸ First, we are told, a libation of pure water had to be offered with pure hands (469f.).¹⁹ Then one had to crown the rims and handles of the libation bowls (472f.) with the freshly-shorn wool of a ewe-lamb (475). Next,

¹⁵ Christ (*Metrik.* 443) terms this dance a paean in honor of Artemis and Apollo.

¹⁶ The scholiast explains *choruein* (the reading of La) as ‘to boil in behalf of the gods.’

¹⁷ Reference to the laurel as a symbol of purification is frequently found in Gk. and Lat. literature: cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 806, *Ion.* 106, Schol. *Alc.* 98; Serv. on *Aen.* I. 329; Liv. 2. 31. 1-5; Ov. *F.* 4. 727; Juv. 2.157.

¹⁸ L. R. Packard (*Studies in Gk. Thought*, Boston, 1886, 127f.) remarks on this passage: “This minute account of the ceremony illustrates the difference of religious usage in different communities. Oedipus, brought up at Corinth and having lived for many years at Thebes . . . , has no knowledge of the necessary means of propitiating Eumenides at Colonus, though these deities seem to have been known by him (cf. *O.C.* 99-106, where he calls them *aoinai* and daughters of Skotas). The eager attention to the precise details given him illustrates the importance of such formalities in Gk. religion.”

¹⁹ Washing or sprinkling of the hands was required before approaching the shrine.

the one who officiated had to face the East,²⁰ and then pour the libation (477). This was to be poured in three streams, and the last bowl was to be drained (479). After this there should be made an offering consisting of water and honey, but no wine.²¹ Then thrice nine sprays of olive²² were to be laid with both hands on the ground, and a propitiatory prayer inaudibly murmured (483f.). Finally, it was necessary to retire, without looking backward (490). An important point to notice in connection with this ceremony is that expiatory offerings and prayers might be made vicariously (488, 495ff.; cf. fr. 34). This idea is well expressed in ll. 498f.: ἀρκεν γὰρ οἴμαι κάντι μητρῶν μλαν ψυχὴν ταδ' ἐκτίνουσαν, ἦν εὔνοος παρῆ.

Another matter that is emphasized here and in *Aj.* 712 is that, to attain the object desired, one should perform the rites of expiation with a good intention,—a point which adds a spiritual touch to the otherwise objective character of the rites. Not often do we find such an idea (i.e. the necessity for *eὐνοία*) expressed in ancient Greek times. (But cf. Porphyry, *De Abstin* 2, 19: ‘One entering within a temple should have a holy reverence; for piety is to *think* holy *thoughts*.’) In many Sophoclean passages, as elsewhere in Greek literature, the stain that requires removal through purification seems to be regarded as purely external, and not within the soul. Thus, e.g., we find several references to the cleansing power of sea-water in absolving sin,—especially the sin of bloodshed (*Aj.* 654, *O.T.* 1227).²³ So large a feature were lustrations in the rites of

²⁰ In the Chap. on Survivals we comment on the fact that expiatory rites and purifications (e.g. *El.* 424f.) were especially connected with the sun. Here (on *O.C.* 477) the Schol. says that the East, as representative of the sun, is regarded as the region of light and purity. The words do not, of course, mean that the sacrifice should be offered at dawn. On the contrary cf. *Etym. M.* 468 and Aes. *Eum.* 109. Discussion of this sacrifice to the Eumenides strictly belongs to the chapter on chthonic ceremonies. We have introduced the topic at this point because, as noted above, no other ceremony mentioned in these plays is so minutely described.

²¹ The schol. here mentions, on the authority of Polemo and of Philochorus, that in Attica libations of pure water were offered to various deities other than the Eumenides.

²² Olive branches symbolized the fruits of the earth and of the womb, for the increase of which the Eumenides were especially prayed to. The olive seems to have been thought to possess some of the lustral and apotropaic qualities of the laurel; cf. Aes. *Eum.* 43, *Cho.* 1035; Eur. *Supp.* 10, I.T. 1101.

²³ Cf. Eur. *Hec.* 610, I.T. 1201.

purifications and atonement,²⁴ that one who had knowledge of lustrations was called a purifier (fr. 34).

In discussing the Sophoclean passages referring to shrines we have casually mentioned the custom of supplicants seeking protection and of relief from affliction before an altar. The suppliant carried a branch of olive or laurel (*ἰκετήριοι O.T. 3.*), round which was wreathed festoons of wool (*στέφη, στέμματα ib. 3, 19*).²⁵ He laid his branch on the altar²⁶ and left it there, if unsuccessful;²⁷ if successful, he took it away (*O.T. 143*).²⁸ These branches probably symbolized the belief of the suppliant, that his fate lay in the hands of the god to whose help he turned. (cf. *O.C. 483; O.T. 3*).²⁹ The suppliant had recourse not only to prayers and lamentation, but to other offerings, as a means of appeasing the wrath of heaven (*ib. 3ff., El. 633f., Tr. 240*). Incense, e.g., was commonly employed in the ritual of Greek sacrifice (*O.T. 3ff., 913, fr. 370*).³⁰

Of all the types of sacrifice that have prevailed among men, that of thanksgiving is probably the highest and noblest.³¹ In

²⁴ Outside of the Homeric poems, Greek religion appears full of rites of purification and of propitiation (which, in the last analysis, are only a specific form of purification, according to Stengel, *Kultusalt.* p. 139). The ritual of purification by water, fire (cf. *Ant. 264*), sacrifice, etc., belongs as much to the history of magic as to the history of religion (cf. Farnell *Gr. and Bab.* p. 291). For rites of purification in general cf. Frazer *Paus. III 53f.* Grote (I, 25) held that idea of purification was not Greek, but was introduced from abroad. The prevailing modern view (cf. Harrison, *Intro. to Prolegom.*) is that chthonic worship, with which purification rites were so associated, were pre-Homeric and deliberately ignored in the Homeric poems in the interests of the Olympian deities.

²⁵ These fillets, so often referred to in Gk. literature, are now recognized as bonds consecrating the wearer, outward badges of devotion; cf. Daremburg-Saglio s.v. *Consecratio*, p. 1449; Cambell Bonner, *The Sacred Bond.* (*TAPA. XLIV*), Pley, *De Lanae in antiquarum ritibus usu*, Giesen, 1911.

²⁶ B. H. Kennedy (*J. Cl. and Sac. Philol.* I. 234f.) contends that it is evident from *O.T. 3*, that the suppliant felt close connection with these chaplets even after they had been laid on the altar. Paley, in various notes on Gk. tragedies, repeats the same suggestion; cf. Aes. *Supp.* 641; Eur. *Supp.* 52, *Heracl.* 124, *I.A.* 1216; Bonner (*TAPA, XLIV*) on Eur *Andr.* 894.

²⁷ Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 259.

²⁸ Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 359.

²⁹ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 43, Harpokr. in Suid Gruppe 88.

³⁰ Cf. Eur. *Tro.* 1064, Ar. *Vesp.* 861.

³¹ By this we do not mean to imply that there are no selfish motives involved in thanksgiving worship. Psychology shows us how complex are our motives, even in regard to very simple acts. Hence it would be labor lost to attempt the task of excluding interested motives (e.g., desire for future blessing,) from even the most sincere expression of devout gratitude to heaven for past favors.

Sophocles the thank-offering is a pious act of worship, failure to perform which is a grave misdemeanor against the gods; e.g. the chorus in the *Ajax* (179ff.) imagine that their hero's dire distress may have been caused by the angry god of war because of lack of gratitude to him (cf. *ib.* 72f.). Votive offerings in gratitude to the gods for victory are mentioned also in *Aj.* 92f. and *Ant.* 143. In the latter passage, we are told that the chieftains around the battle-field at Thebes 'left the tribute of their brazen panoplies' at the temple of Zeus the god of victory. This customary act of devotion was observed because this god was believed to bring about success to his devotees by putting their foes to flight.³²

The vow of gratitude made to Zeus by Hercules (*Tr.* 240) is later (286f., 659, 760ff.) recalled when mention is made of the fulfillment of the obligation. This thank-offering is termed *ἄγνα θύματα* (287). Apparently such sacrifices were quite frequently offered; at all events, such is the implication where Hylus says that he has often gone to the Oetean promontory to sacrifice (cf. fr. 851). Hercules, in turn, expects an expression of appreciation and gratitude for the gift of his bow; in *Ph.* 1432f. he bids Philoctetes make a thank-offering at the funeral pyre.

A holy silence was³³ customarily enjoined at the pouring of libations and while the barley meal³⁴ was being strewn on the altar and upon the victim.³⁵ Odysseus states that Philoctetes' presence at Troy was especially deprecated because this *εὐφημία* (cf. *El.* 630f.) was disturbed by the incessant cries of the wounded hero; 'For us there was no peace at sacrifice or at libations' (*Ph.* 8). In l. 1032 and fr. 699 there are further references to interference of sacrificial ceremonies, by outcries. The sacrifice regularly preceded the libation.³⁶ The order given in *Ph.* 8 (*λοιβῆς . . . θυμάτων*) is prompted by metrical convenience,³⁷ while the natural order is given below in 1.1033 (*αἱθειν ιερά . . . σπένδειν*). The first libation at sacrifice was generally offered to Hestia (fr. 726).

In the course of a sacrifice, those present sometimes participated

³² Cf. Scol. on this passage. It was a common practice among many ancient people thus to hang up on the walls of some sacred edifice the trophies gained in war.

³³ Cf. Chap. on survivals.

³⁴ Cf. fr. 557 and *Il.* I 548.

³⁵ Cf. Eur. *H.F.* 922ff.

³⁶ Cf. *Il.* I 462.

³⁷ Cf. *Il.* IX 500.

in a general song or cry. The word *παιάν* usually denotes the song of joy raised by men;³⁸ while *δλόλομος* is often used with reference to the cry of women at religious rites and at events of good omen (cf. *Tr.* 206).³⁹ Another word ordinarily applied to ritual cries of men is *ἀλάλαγμος*.⁴⁰ But under certain circumstances this more sonorous cry might be uttered by women; cf. fr. 534, where the term is applied to the invocation of the sorceress to some god.⁴¹ In *Tr.* 206 this term is likewise used of the cries of women. The whole ceremony was conducted with due regard to form and any interruption in its course was, as far as possible, avoided. (O.C. 887ff.)

Offerings made at sacrifices were of various kinds: bulls, sheep, fruit, cereals, oil, water, milk, wine, honey, etc. Locks of hair were sometimes offered, particularly to the dead and also to a river or to a river god.⁴² In fr. 126 reference is made to a public offering in connection with the ceremony of introduction into the phrateres;⁴³ a lock of hair is chosen as a sacrifice on behalf of the whole city,—‘for among the barbarians it is an old custom to make human sacrifice to Chronus.’ We have no precise evidence as to the significance of such a *κοτρειον* offering⁴⁴ in primitive times. But this Sophoclean passage appears to suggest the use of animal, or the semblance thereof, as the surrogate for human sacrifice.

Ordinary sacrifices to the gods consisted either of fireless offerings (*ἄπνυρα*)⁴⁵ as in fr. 417, or burnt offerings (*έμπνυρα*)⁴⁶ as in *Ant.* 1005. Fireless offerings comprised offerings of fruit, cereals, liquids, and the like, as contrasted with the burnt offerings of animal flesh. The Clytemnestra’s offering of various fruits (*El.* 634f.) belong to the class of fireless sacrifices.

³⁸ Cf. Aes. *Pers.* 393, Eur. *Ion*. 125, 141.

³⁹ Cf. Od. III. 450, Hdt. IV 189, Eur. *Phoen.* 337. In Eur. *Med.* 1175f, *ololuge* signifies a cry of joy, as opposed to *kokutos*, a cry of lamentation. cf. Farnell *C.R.* IV. 180.

⁴⁰ Cf. Heliod. 35.

⁴¹ Cf. Aes. fr. 57, Eur. *Hel.* 1352. In Eur. *Bacch.* 1133 the term is used of the infuriated Bacchanals.

⁴² Cf. Chap on survivals. For the concept of rivers as sustainers of life. cf. *Aj.* 420, 863; fr. 91, 523; Aes; *Cho.* 6. *Theb.* 294.

⁴³ Pollux 8. 107, Wyse on Isoc. 358, Toepffer in Pauly-Wiss I. 2676.

⁴⁴ Evidently derived from *keir*, ‘to cut’ or from *kor*, ‘youth’; cf. Suid. s.v., and *Elym. Mag.* 353.51.

⁴⁵ Cf. Eur. fr. 904.

⁴⁶ Cf. Eur. *Hel.* 457, *I.A.* 59. In Soph. *El.* 405, *empyla* is used loosely for *spondai*.

Fruit offerings also figure as an important part of the sacrifice described in fr. 398: 'There was the fleece of sheep, and there was the drink offering drawn from the vine and the well-stored grape, and there were various fruits all mixed with barley, also the oil of the olive, as well as the variegated wax-moulded work of the yellow bee.' Porphyry, our authority for ascribing these lines to Sophocles, does not state on what occasion or with what object in view the sacrifice was made.⁴⁷ It appears however, to be of the primitive bloodless type,—an offering of first fruits (wool, wine, grapes and other fruit, grain, olive oil, and honey) as a propitiation to the gods to induce a continuance of fertility.⁴⁸ Wool is often mentioned as an element in sacrifice.⁴⁹ Barley, singularly enough, is mentioned (l. 3) as an item of the various first-fruits, not as a mere adjunct of the sacrifice.

Another fragment of Sophocles' plays that is descriptive of sacrificial ceremony pertains to the custom of setting baskets before a statue of Athena (fr. 844). The passage itself has been the center of much discussion.⁵⁰ If Farnell's explanation be correct, then the act described seems to be part of a fireless sacrificial ceremony.

Burnt offerings, however, especially of animal victims, were far more common among the Greeks; hence they evidently were the normal type.⁵¹ In *Ph.* 1032 the word 'burn' (*αἴθεντ*) is used in reference to ordinary sacrificial ceremony, while in *Ant.* 1020 'thighs'

⁴⁷ Porphyry, *de abst.* 2.19. Pearson calls attention to the remarkable correspondence in the details here to the sacrifice to the black Demeter at Phigalia (cf. Paus. 8.42.11). For other conjectures cf. Wilamowitz (*De. Tr. Gr. Fr.*, 17). Kappelmacher (*Wiener Franzos*, 39), Farnell (C.R. XI. 294), Herwerden (C.R. XVI. 54), Harrison (*Proleg.* 93ff.).

⁴⁸ Cf. Athen. 473c 478d.

⁴⁹ For the importance of barley in sacrificial rites cf. Plut. *Qu. Gr.* 6. 292. B. and H. Von Fritze-Hermes, 1897.

⁵⁰ Cf. Pearson's note and also Jessen in Pauly-Wiss. VI 438ff., *Liknon*, which originally meant 'shovel' then 'basket,' came later on to describe the cradle in which the infant Dionysus was said to have been laid. The difficulty, then is to explain how the *liknon* of Dionysus is here associated with the worship of Athena Ergane. Harrison (C.R. VIII. 270 and *Proleg.* 520) argues that Athena Ergane was first a goddess of works in the Hesiodic sense, and so naturally became associated with the god of wine. 46 Farnell (I. 315) argues that Athena Ergane was not an agricultural deity, but that *liknon*, by virtue of its convenient shape, may have been commonly used as a receptacle for cereal oblations.

⁵¹ Burnt sacrifices of samplings of the best animals and fruits of the earth were common as offerings to the gods among nearly all early peoples.

(μηρίων)⁵² is employed as a typical expression to designate a sacrifice. The victim was first lifted up (cf. *El.* 634); then the neck was pierced (cf. *Aj.* 298). After the blood was caught up, the thighs were cut off, covered with fat, and offered to the gods (cf. *Ant.* 1011).⁵³ Tongues of the animals were sometimes cut off at sacrifices (cf. *Aj.* 238f.).⁵² When the donor was unable to provide a living ox, he sometimes employed a substitute in the form of cakes fashioned in the shape of one.⁵⁴ The word ἀντιβούον in fr. 405 may be an allusion to this curious custom.⁵⁵

Sheep as well as oxen (cf. e.g. *Tr.* 760ff.) are mentioned by Sophocles as being common victims used in the performance of sacred rites. In *El.* 277ff. Clytemnestra is said to make monthly offerings of sheep to tutelary gods. A bull is the sacrificial victim mentioned in fr. 25. In the sacrifice of Heracles, described in *Tr.* 760ff., twelve faultless victims, the first-fruits of the booty, are offered; then the other sacrificial animals are led to the altar; a hundred in all.⁵⁶

Various considerations played a part in determining the age of the victims. In fr. 751, one-year olds are mentioned as especially desirable.⁵⁷ Sacrifices that lacked nothing to the purpose, either in the victims, in fire, or in rites, were termed ἄγνα (*Tr.* 287). That the worth of the sacrifice is connected in any way with the size and beauty of the offering is an idea rare in classical Greek literature. Such a thought, however, is implied in *El.* 457. After the sacrifice,

⁵² *Meros* is the ordinary word for thigh; while *Meria* or *Mera* is employed only in the sacrificial sense, *Il.* I. 460, II. 427; *Od.* III. 364, XII. 464, XIII. 26; *Hes. Th.* 552. Jebb (n. on *Ant.* 1011) describes the word as the technical expression denoting the thigh-bones, with so much flesh as they chose to leave upon them. cf. Clemens Alex. Strom. 851, Menander ap. Athen. 1462.

⁵³ The *El.* and *Aj.* passages are not directly related to regular ritual sacrifices; but, as they contain expressions that were evidently technical sacrificial terms, they are convenient to cite as illustrative of the regular ritual.

⁵⁴ Cf. Schol. on. *Thuc.* I. 126, Suid. s.v. *bous hebdomas* Hesych. II 544. *Hdt.* (II. 47) mentions a similar custom among the Egyptians.

⁵⁵ This term may be but an echo of Homeric references to the ox as a standard of value (cf. e.g. *Il.* XXIII. 705, *Od.* I. 431).

⁵⁶ Too much emphasis should not be placed upon the kind of animal offered to a deity; the significance of this part of the service is often overestimated by scholars, who forget that the considerations of convenience was doubtless a large factor in determining what the victim should be.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. *Il.* I. 467ff.

there was usually, as in Homeric times, a feast for those present (*El.* 284).⁵⁸

When approaching or passing a shrine, it was customary to salute and to audibly invoke the tutelary deity (cf. *O.C.* 127). The gods who guarded the home were reverenced at the threshold by those entering (*El.* 1374f.). Salutation of sacred objects was also evidently a customary pius duty (*Ph.* 657). Moved by the vision at the death of Oedipus, Theseus salutes the heavens, as representatives of the *ὑπαρχοί θεοί*, and also bows down in adoration to the earth, as the home of the chthonic deities (*O.C.* 1653f.). In the *Philoctetes*, also, the earth is invoked as a divine power (1408, 1452, 1464) by those about to put out to sea. And both before embarking upon a voyage and on one's return, it was a natural and common act of devotion to pray and sacrifice to the gods of the sea (cf. *Ph.* 1077, fr. 751). Pilgrimages to celebrated shrines were also a customary act of divine worship (cf. *O.T.* 900).⁵⁹ The splashing of the statue of a god with blood is referred to (fr. 819); but whether this was done as a normal incident⁶⁰ or as an exceptional outrage⁶¹ is not made clear by the context. In fr. 425 there is reference to the custom of offering the third libation at a banquet to Zeus Soter.⁶² Finally, in fr. 708, we find note a vague reference to some ceremonial lighting of a sacred fire.⁶³

⁵⁸ Usually there was no feast after the Gk. chthonic sacrifices; cf. Porphyry *De abst.* 2.44, Stengel in *Jahrb. f. Phil.* 1882, 369ff. But cf. Paton, *Spir. and Cult of dead in Ant.*, 13, 54, 79, 135f., 254, give abundant evidence of the existence of sacrificial funeral feasts at which the living partook of the offerings, and thus sealed their communion with the spirits of the departed.

⁵⁹ Cf. Chap. on altars and shrines.

⁶⁰ Cf. Eur. *I.A.* 1514, *I.T.* 72, 226. Both ancient and modern times afford the student of comparative religion innumerable instances of such religious pilgrimages.

⁶¹ Cf. Eur. *Andr.* 259.

⁶² Cf. Aes. Supp. 26, *Ag.* 257, *ib.* 1386, *Eum.* 762, fr. 55; Hesych., s.v. *tritos krater*, is our authority for ascribing this statement to Sophocles.

⁶³ The fire of the Vestal Virgins were rekindled in the same primitive way; cf. Warde Fowler, *Rom. Fest.* 147.

VI. CHTHONIC CEREMONIES

No type of Greek worship was distinctly chthonic; ceremonies of this nature comprised, with few variations, the same general elements as those described above.¹ Propitiatory² and mystic³ services were indeed, more commonly performed in honor of the nether powers (cf. e.g. *El.* 134)⁴ than in other cults. Libations of a propitiatory and soothing character, e.g., formed an important part of the worship of the Erinyes, as has been mentioned. The precise formula for appeasing these deities, which is given in *O.C.* 466ff., is no invention of the poet. Sophocles here describes a chthonic service similar to that described elsewhere.⁵ Wine was usually excluded from these libations (*O.C.* 100, 481);⁶ indeed nephalic offerings were a characteristic feature of this ritual.⁷ The dead were not, however, regarded as so remote from man that he feared to give them wine, the daily drink of the Greeks.⁸ *χόαν* is the term most often applied to libations offered to chthonic gods (*O.C.* 477,

¹ Did the Greeks stand in such relation to their Olympian gods that propitiation in their cult was considered unnecessary? K. O. Muller (ed. Aes. *Eum.* p. 139ff.) held that normally only the *chthonioi* received propitiatory offering. Fairbanks (*A. J. P.* XXI, 254ff.) and Hewitt (*Harv. Stud.* XIX 110) concur in this opinion that the apotropaic deities were, in general, chthonic. The Greeks seem to have been imbued with the idea that the *chthonioi* had boundless power to harm. But they were not only dispensers of ill, but also averters of it (cf. Euseb. *Praep. Evan.* 4.9.7.). In their cult, therefore, propitiatory ceremonies were especially esteemed.

² Cf. Fairbanks *A. J. P.* XI 259, Headlam *C.R.* XVI 53.

³ Magic rites are closely associated to the cult of the *chthonioi*, cf. Reiss ap. Pauly-Wiss I 77.44.

⁴ The term *chthonioi* is here employed to denote, not merely the soul-gods and similar divine beings, but also the spirits of heroes and of the other dead. Frequently the vegetative deities and the soul deities are so blended as to be practically indistinguishable; cf. Farnell III 220.

⁵ Paus. I. II. 3.

⁶ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 107, Eur. *I.T.* 106f. This was perhaps the vestige of a custom antedating the use of wine.

⁷ Cf. Porphyry. *de abst.* 1220.

⁸ Cf. Stengel, *Festschr. f. Friedlander*, p. 418. Moreover chthonic offerings (i.e. *enagismata*) were not universally bloodless; cf. Pind. *Ol.* I. 90, Paus. 5. 13. 2, Farnell *Y. W. C. S.*, 1913, p. 133.

1599) and the dead (cf. *O.C.* 477; *El.* 406; *Ant.* 406, 431, 440, 901);⁹ while the libations to the gods above were generally called *σπονδαι* (e.g. fr. 416). *Λοιβαι*, usually synonymous with *σπονδαι*, in *El.* 52 is applied to offerings made the dead.

The local nature of the chthonic cult was very pronounced; the Erinyes e.g. were worshipped only at such shrines as that described in *O.C.* 39ff. With these special spots their cult was very intimately connected. The propitiatory and reverential tone of the invocation to be uttered on approaching the shrine of these awe inspiring goddesses is worthy of note (*O.C.* 41, 128ff.).¹⁰ Near this shrine was the 'abrupt earth-rooted threshold with the brazen stairs' (*O.C.* 1590f. cf. *ib.* 57). In fr. 832, a similar 'gorge of Hades' is mentioned. In describing the approach to the underworld as a deep cleft in the earth,¹¹ Sophocles is following tradition. Down into such pits¹² or trenches the piacular offerings to the chthonic powers were poured¹³ (*O.C.* 100, 481),—not offered¹⁴ up in the form of burnt sacrifices, as often in the Olympian ritual.¹⁵

Closely connected with the worship of the nether gods is the attitude of the Greeks towards burial service.¹⁶ Great stress upon proper mode of interment appears many times in the *Antigone*. Burial of the dead¹⁷ is, in fact, so important a duty that for it Antigone

⁹ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 15f.; Eur. *Or.* 113f., *I.T.* 633, *I.A.* 159.

¹⁰ Chap. on the Erinyes.

¹¹ Cf. Pearson on fr. 832. The underworld deities are often represented as holding sway over caves and other underground places. Hewitt (*Harv. Stud.* XIX 87) gives this connection with underground localities as one of the general chthonic characteristics.

¹² Such a cavern or mundus as those found in the Roman forum, on the Palatine, etc.; cf. Macrob. *Sat.* I, XVI. 16-18.

¹³ Cf. *Od.* XI. 25.

¹⁴ We have no convenient Eng. word to denote the chthonic worship conducted with rites of *Enagizein* (the pouring down of *Meiligmata* into the ground to propitiate the *chthonioi*); cf. Harrison *J. H. S.* XIX. 209 and 249.

¹⁵ The word commonly used to express sacrifices to the *Superi* is *thuein*.

¹⁶ Cf. Chap. on views regarding death.

¹⁷ This idea is not rare in Greek literature; cf. e.g. *Il.* 22, 358; *Od.* ii. 72; Eur. *Hel.* 1161, Ar. *Pac.* 649. Moreover, archeological remains supplement this philological evidence as to the fact that inhumation was the more general, as well as the more primitive, method of disposal of the dead in Greece; for Gk. cemeteries disclose a preponderance of burials over cremations. Among the 'Dipylon-graves' of the 'geometric period,' discovered in the earliest known Athenian cemetery, only one has been found containing an urn with ashes and burnt bones. Moreover, recent excavations in various parts of the Gk. world appear to show that the burial alone was the custom in the Mycenaean age. Literary references to contemporary affairs likewise indicate that cremation was the exception, not the prevalent custom, among the Greeks.

sacrifices her life. For such a cause (*Aj.* 1108ff., 1308ff.) Teucer also is willing to sacrifice his life. The last part of this play (three hundred and seventy four lines, a third of the whole) is devoted to the question of the burying of the hero, thereby showing how vital a matter this was for the Greeks. Menelaus announces that the body of Ajax, an enemy, shall not receive burial (*ib.* 1047ff.). Here, possibly, we have a general statement of ordinary Greek morality: 'It is not fitting for one to allow burial rites to an enemy' (*ib.* 1132). But Teucer defies this cruel order and straightway makes arrangements for the funeral (*ib.* 1378ff.). With great care he prepares all matters connected with the burial (*ib.* 1398) and is also quite punctilious as to who shall participate in these burial rites (*ib.* 1381ff.).

The duty of survivors to bury their kinsmen with due rites is a common topic (e.g. *O.C.* 1409f., 1453f., 1650ff.: *El.* 134, 870; *Aj.* 1109; *O.T.* 1447. Even a hostile kinsman felt bound to observe the rites due the dead (*El.* 1468f.). Aside from the benefit that was thought to accrue from burial honors paid the dead, however, the impulse of natural affection (cf. the care of Teucer, Antigone and Electra) was a strong factor that influenced the survivors and helped to preserve the chthonic cult. Sometimes this debt of natural piety was repudiated. Thus Orestes renounces all interest in his dead mother; he disclaims all the duties supposed to devolve upon the nearest relatives in time of death (*El.* 1470). This word may, indeed, apply to the burial of ashes, as well as of the unburied corpse (e.g. *Aj.* 577); i.e. *θάπτω* does not exclude the idea of cremation. So, likewise, the term *τάφος*, while it may be used in a general sense to denote burial ceremony (e.g. *Ant.* 534) usually applies specifically to a grave or tomb.

Any insult to the dead, it is said, aroused the ire of the nether gods (*Ant.* 504, 733, 749, 921, 943, etc.); for they considered proper care of the dead their due (*ib.* 519; *O.C.* 402, fr. 777). The strongest expression of this idea is found in the speech of the seer to Creon: 'thou keepest in the world what belongs to the gods below, a corpse unburied, unhonored, all unhallowed: this is the violence done them by thee' (*ib.* 1070).¹⁸ To leave a corpse unburied, then, was to inflict great dishonor upon the dead and as well as upon all of the gods (*Aj.* 113; cf. *ib.* 204, 1327, 1343, *O.T.* 1425, *O.C.* 1410, *Ant.* 76f.).

¹⁸ Jebb interprets this passage as a reference to the *superi*, i.e. that it is an offense against those gods to keep a *miasma* in their presence. This may be true, nevertheless the verb suits a positive rather than a negative wrong.

This whole idea is summed up in the word *ἀνοσον* (*Ant.* 1071).¹⁹ Zeus, not only as the supreme guardian of all religious duty, but also as a chthonic power (cf. *O.C.* 1606), and avenger of wrongs in general (cf. *El.* 175ff., 209ff.), was thought to be especially opposed to such denial of burial rites (*Ant.* 450ff.).

Commenting upon this duty to the dead, Antigone declares that the ultimate standards of right and wrong are eternal and immutable; 'Mortal decrees cannot override the unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven' (*Ant.* 453f.). The origin and sanction of these laws are alike divine: 'for their life is not of today or yesterday, but of all time, and no man knows when they were first put forth' (*ib.* 456ff.). The necessity of abiding by these divine laws is one of the most noteworthy and fundamental religious ideas to be found in Sophocles' plays (*ib.* 1113f., *O.T.* 863ff., *El.* 1095.).

Mourning was the first step to be taken in showing due honor to the dead (*Ph.* 338, 360; *El.* 708ff., 804, 1468f; *Aj.* 892ff., *Ant.* 28, 1247f.). In *O.T.* 1018 the chorus pour forth their lamentation for Oedipus as if he were already dead. Here as in *Aj.* 900ff., *Ant.* 1079ff., 1316., *El.* 86ff., and *Tr.* 847ff., the cries of lamentation are more formal. In fr. 852: there is another reference to formal dirges for the dead 'wailing in my home,—the muse and one siren.'²⁰ At the death of Oedipus due lamentation in a responsive chant is made for him by his two daughters (*O.C.* 1670ff.).²¹ A similar dirge is sung for Ajax by his kinsmen and followers (*Aj.* 891ff.). But to weep and to lament excessively for the dead might stir up the wrath of the lower gods (*ib.* 1751), and both Ajax (*Aj.* 579) and Heracles (*Tr.* 1209) deprecate unrestrained lamentation at the time of their death.

Washing and dressing the corpse was, of course, the next step to be taken by the mourners. The frequent reference to the proper laying out of the dead show how important this was considered (*Aj.* 922, 1170, 1405; *Ant.* 901, 1201; *O.C.* 1598, 1602f., etc.). Antigone bewails the fact that she has had no opportunity to render her father the last rites of the dead personally (*O.C.* 1750; cf. *El.* 870).

¹⁹ In historic times, interment was the rule among the Greeks. *Thapto* is the term chiefly used in this respect (cf. the Armenian word *Damban*, a 'grave,'). Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 19, Thuc. II 52.

²⁰ Cf. Eur. *Her.* 109. For the connection of Sirens with dirges, cf. Sophocles fr. 861, Eur. *Hel.* 167, and Harrison, *Proleg.* 204.

²¹ Cf. *Il.* 18. 315; 24. 719f.

Electra likewise laments that Orestes has been deprived, as it appears, of funeral rites at home (*El.* 1128). That great emphasis was laid upon this personal service to one's dead may be inferred from such passages as these and also from *Aj.* 1371ff. and *Ant.* 900f.²² As the ablution of the dead was considered holy (*Ant.* 1201, 1405), it was not felt proper for an enemy to participate actively in the burial service. Odysseus, e.g., may be present at the burial of Ajax and help indirectly; he is not, however, allowed to assist in the actual service, for his touching of the dead might be distasteful to the departed spirit (*Aj.* 1396f., 1400; *El.* 431f.). In *O.C.* 1603 reference is made to the customary robe for the dead, i.e. white.

After the washing and dressing of the body, cremation frequently took place (*Aj.* 1404ff.; *El.* 757; *Ant.* 1202; *Tr.* 1193ff.).²³ Heracles' funeral pyre (*Tr.* 1193ff.) is both of oak,—a wood sacred to his father Zeus,—and of wild olive,—brought to Greece by the hero himself. A torch of pine is used (*ib.* 1198), 'freshly-plucked boughs' make up the hastily-built pyre of Polyneices (*Ant.* 1202). To raise the body upon the pyre was evidently considered the duty of the nearest kinsman (*El.* 1139f.). After being raised aloft (*Aj.* 1404f.), the remains were solemnly burned (*Ant.* 1202). Then the ashes were placed in an urn (*El.* 757, 1400) and entombed. Electra suggests that the crows and dogs act as buriers of Aegisthus (*El.* 1487f.).²⁴ Her words might be taken as a reference to a class of professional corpse-bearers.²⁵

Sometimes the entombment occurred at a place other than the place of cremation, (cf. *El.* 54, 747, 1113) for burial in one's native soil was considered especially desirable (*Ant.* 1203, *El.* 760). Tombs of stone (*O.C.* 1576) and of rock (*Ant.* 774, 1217f.) are mentioned by Sophocles. Over Polyneices a huge mound is raised (*ib.* 1217f.). Special tombs are mentioned as follows: that of Agamemnon (*El.* 893, 135), that of Ajax (*Aj.* 1163ff.), of Oedipus (*O.C.* 1545), and that of Antigone (*Ant.* 217f.).

²² Cf. *Il.* 18. 350, *Phaedo* 115a, Lucian, *De Luctu* 11. p. 927.

²³ Along side of burial, cremation existed from a very early date in Gr., as elsewhere in Ind.-Eur. lands. We know this from the testimony of archaeology as well as from literature. While burial was the older custom, cremation was also practiced in very ancient times,—certainly as far back as the bronze age,—and in widely scattered regions.

²⁴ Cf. similar ironical statements in *Ant.* 1081f., *Aes.* *Sept.* 1020f., Gorgias apud Longin.

²⁵ Cf. *Alc.* 607, Pol. VI 195.

When the performance of these rites was not possible, burials might be symbolized by the casting of dust upon the corpse and by pouring of the libations (*Ant.* 255, 429ff.). Antigone speaks of these acts as being, to all intents and purposes, equivalent to the regular burial service. In the first scene (viz. of the *Antigone*) she speaks of going to bury him and to pour libations upon his tomb (72, 80f.); while later she lays claim to having accomplished this. Now why, if the sprinkling of the dust was the essence of the symbolical rite of burial, does she consider it necessary to repeat the act²⁶ (*ib.* 429ff.)? Was it not done once for all (*ib.* 245ff.)? Were the thrice-poured libations absolutely necessary for the repose of Polyneices' spirit? The rite was looked upon as being incomplete, perhaps, unless the libations were poured while the dust was still upon the dead.²⁷

These burial rites (*ib.* 901f.) constitute the most necessary part of the offerings to the dead. But further services were due in the form of offerings at the grave. The libations were, it seems, to be poured in three streams (*ib.* 431). Those offered at Agamemnon's tomb (*El.* 894) consist of milk.²⁸ Honey was likewise commonly employed in ceremonies of appeasement or of atonement (fr. 398, *O.C.* 481), though it was not, of course, exclusively so used.²⁹ Flowers also were offered as gifts to the dead; e.g. Orestes lays a profusion of flowers on his father's tomb (*El.* 896). A more customary act of devotion on the part of the relatives and friends of the deceased is offering to their dead a lock of hair. (*Aj.* 1174; *El.* 53, 449, 452, 901, 908ff; fr. 587).³⁰ This rite of cutting off the hair can be interpreted only as a ritual act in worship of the dead.³¹ In *Aj.* 1175, this offering of hair is called the 'treasure of supplicants' or 'a sacred deposit having virtue for supplication' (*ἱκτήριον θησαυρόν*), a phrase that

²⁶ Jebb refers us to Hdt. I. 28. 35.

²⁷ Post (*Harv. Stud.*, XXIII. 114) suggests that we may here, perhaps, detect a fault in the mode of exposition; he admits however, that the poet could rely on the knowledge of his audience regarding this matter of ritual.

²⁸ Cf. Stengel *Gk. Sakral*. 90.

²⁹ Wunder (n. on *Ant.* 431) understands the triple streams to be compounded of milk, wine, and honey. In *Aes. Pers.* 602 they are of mingled milk, honey, water, wine and oil. In *Eur. Or.* 115 and *I.T.* 163 they consist of honey, wine and oil.

³⁰ Cf. *Aes. Cho.* 4ff; *Eur. Or.* 128, *I.T.* 172f., *Hel.* 1203f., *Tro.* 480, 1182; Rouse, *Gk. Votive offering* 240ff.

³¹ Hair offerings to deities have been common throughout the world, according to Paton, *loc. cit.* p. 11. Cf. II. XXIII. 150ff.; *Eur. Alc.* 75.

seems to emphasize some efficacy latent in the hair; i.e., it expresses the power of the offering.³² Eurysaces by making this offering and by touching the corpse is placed as a supplicant under the double protection of his father's spirit and of Zeus, the protector of suppliants (*ib.* 1172ff.). Not hair alone, but also such personal gifts as one's girdle, were offered to the dead (*El.* 452). Sometimes the martial equipment of a soldier was burned on his funeral pyre or buried in his grave (*Aj.* 577, 1409).³³ These libations and gifts were dutifully offered to the dead by the survivors as themselves mortals (fr. 381).

Even after burial, service to the dead was customary.³⁴ For Clytemnestra is represented as holding annual festivities on the anniversary of her husband's death (*El.* 275ff.).³⁵ The gifts she sends to his grave (*ib.* 406, 427, 431) do not relieve her mind of fear, so she comes in person with an offering to placate his spirit (*ib.* 516ff.). Long after Agamemnon's demise libations, locks of hair, and other gifts are offered at his tomb by each of his children (*ib.* 53, 449, 452, 894). This play (the *Electra*) is replete with references to such post-humous rites (cf. e.g. 84, 326, 405, 431f., 440ff., 452ff.). Even the act of vengeance, which is the motive and culmination of the whole, is regarded as a service to the dead (e.g. 1419). No memorial service was to be held at the tomb of Oedipus however; the sacred silence of that place was to be kept inviolate, and was not to be invaded by the customary invocations and prayers to the dead (*O.C.* 1762).

Certain common and technical terms used in connection with burial ceremonies should be noted at this point. "Εμπυρα is used to describe the gifts sent to Agamemnon's tomb (*El.* 405). These are also termed ἐντάφια (*ib.* 326) and ἐπιτύμβια (*ib.* 915). Chrysothemis, referring to the gifts she is bringing to her father's tomb, mentions only the libations, as these formed the most characteristic part of that offering (*ib.* 406). In connection with libation pouring, the

³² For the idea of strength residing in the hair, cf. *Ju.* 16-17. G. Wolff, however, construes the phrase as meaning a pathetic expression of the poverty of action.

³³ For the burial of body-armor with a dead warrior, cf. Paton, *loc. cit.* 131ff. Weapons, ornaments, etc., were buried with the dead in all parts of the Ind.-Eur. world, as far back as the neolithic age.

³⁴ Cf. Aes. fr. 266; Eur. fr. 640, *Hel.* 1421, *Tro.* 1248.

³⁵ On the observance of death anniversaries cf. Hdt. IV. 26, Eur. *Hec.* 319, Isae. 2. 46.

guard in the *Antigone* (l. 431) uses the word *στέψει*, which is explained by the schol. here and on *O.C.* 479, as meaning ‘besprinkle in a circular fashion.’ This word, or its compounds, is frequently in this sense used: cf. *Aj.* 93; *El.* 53, 441, 458, 895; *Ant.* 431. In *El.* 84 and 436 the libations are termed *λουτρά*,³⁶ a word more commonly used with reference to the washing of the corpse (*Aj.* 1405, *El.* 1139).

The most common technical word for laying out the dead is *προτιθέναι* (*Ant.* 24, *El.* 1487). *κόσμειν* also used frequently designates the *πρόθεσις* of a corpse (*Ant.* 395, 900; *El.* 1139, 1401; *Aj.* 1046; *O.C.* 1410, 1602). Another word referring to laying out of the dead (*Ant.* 922): is *συγκαθαρισκεῖν*, while *βαστάζειν* is the usual word for lifting the corpse (*Aj.* 827, 920). Another ritual expression of burial, is found in *Ant.* 502, ἐν τάφῳ τιθέσθαι, (cf. *O.C.* 411 and 1410, where the expression is varied by plural form—*ταφοῖσι*). The use of *κτίσειν* in *Ant.* 1101 implies the solemnity of formal burial, as contrasted with the symbolic rites hastily performed by Antigone. Funeral rites are sometimes referred to as *νόμοι* (*Ant.* 24, 519, fr. 777). *Τέλειν* is another technical term for the act of fulfilling the last rites of burial (*O.C.* 503, 1436; *O.T.* 1448). Various words are used to denote cinerary urns; *τύπωμα* (*El.* 53), *χαλκός* (*ib.* 757), *λέβας* (*ib.* 1401). Likewise there is found a variety of expressions referring to monuments erected in honor of the dead: *θημά* (fr. 541), *τυμβήρει θαλάμῳ* (*Ant.* 946), *κολώνη* (*El.* 895). *Τάφος*, a common word for tomb, is used very often in Sophocles. In *Ant.* 306, 395, 490, and 534 the word is used as an equivalent of *ταφή*. Conversely *ταφή*, while ordinarily used with reference to the act of burial (cf. *El.* 1210; *Aj.* 1326, 1388), denotes a tomb in *Aj.* 1109 (cf. a transitional use of the term *ib.* 1090). *Εύγή*, a common word for ‘couch’ is used figuratively for ‘tomb’ in *El.* 486. *Τύμβος* the usual word for sepulchre, frequently appears (*El.* 51, 432, 760, 900, 1135; *Ant.* 886, 891, 1203; *O.C.* 402, 1545, 1756).

³⁶ Cf. Eur. *Phoen.* 1662.

VII. THE OLYMPIAN GODS

A variety of terms are employed by the Greek poets to distinguish the different classes of gods. Epithets of a general character, however, do not often occur in the plays we are discussing. Sophocles designates the gods above as follows: δλύμπιοι θεοί (*Ph.* 315), τοῖς ἄγω θεοῖσι (*Ant.* 1072 f.) τοῖς κάτω (*ib.* 75), οἱ κάτω θεοί (*El.* 292), θεῶν τῶν γερτέρων (*Ant.* 602), τῶν κάτωθεν θεῶν (*ib.* 1070). Moreover, in some passages the poet indicates the nature of the gods by such general epithets as ἐπόψιοι (*Ph.* 1040). Sometimes the gods are represented as the saviours of men (*ib.* 21, 281), especially in a local sense, i.e., as patrons of those in a particular locality (e.g. *Tr.* 183, *El.* 428), or as protectors of a race (*ib.* 411). Their immortality is declared, not by common epithets as αἰενγένεται or ἀμβροτοί, but by the words: μόνοις οὐ γίγνεται θεοῖσι γῆρας οὐδὲ κατθανειν (*O.C.* 607).

ZEUS¹

In the works of Sophocles the prominence given to individual gods varies in accordance with the scene of the action, the conditions inherent in the legend, and other data. But even in plays where another god is more frequently mentioned (e.g. the *Electra*), the power of Zeus is always felt in the background.² As elsewhere in Greek literature, in Sophocles³ the position of Zeus is preëminent: cf. specific mention of his supreme power in *El.* 174f., 605ff.; *Ant.* 184, 604ff.; *O.T.* 903; *O.C.* 607, 1085, 1381; *Ph.* 680, 989, 1413, 1367; *Tr.* 127, 275, 1106, 1278; *Aj.* 1389, frs. 895, 907, 1129. He alone of the gods is absolutely free and uncontrolled; he alone has all things according to his choice: κεῖνος γὰρ ἔχει τέλος ἡδὲ καὶ ἀρχήν fr. 1129 (cf. fr. 524). Moreover, while all the gods live without woe (fr. 946), unalloyed good fortune belongs to him alone (fr. 895). He is the director and sole dispenser of fortune (frs. 273, 275, 320); his

¹ We are making no attempt to trace the historical development of the literary conceptions of the Greek gods or of their cults.

² This predominant position of Zeus among the Greeks is not at all surprising in view of the fact that the most prominent feature the religion of primitive Indo-European races was the worship of the bright powers of nature, particularly of the great 'sky-father,' **Deivos* (called Zeus by the Greeks).

³ It is only the personified abstractions Love and Fate that are ever referred to as possible superior influences.

excellence is shown by the exact correspondence of his will with the decrees of fate⁴ (frs. 590, 871). This identification of fate and his will emphasizes the exalted position of Zeus over all subordinate deities.⁵ In fr. 895 he is referred to as the representative of fate, or possibly of perfect happiness and success: *ἀεὶ γὰρ εὖ πίπτουσιν οἱ Διὸς κύβοι.*⁶ This power, to be sure, seems limited in fr. 524; but the context there is uncertain and the reference is only a passing one. In the second stasimon of the *Antigone* his omnipotence is further glorified. The chorus here tells of the curse sent by Zeus upon the Labdacidae (583-603), and declares that the might of this god cannot be encroached upon or limited by mortals (604 f.) or by all-ensnaring sleep (606) or by the untiring months (607 f.). Zeus likewise is the god to whom the ruin of the Pelopidae is ascribed (*ib.* 4). He is the ultimate power that directs the destiny of Heracles (*Tr.* 250, 274, 994, 1003, 1024, 1278).⁷ This same idea runs, through the *Philoctetes* also,—that the apparent causes of the hero's misfortunes are after all only the agents of the will of Zeus (113, 993, 998, 1415 f.). When Philoctetes appeals to the local deities of Lemnos, Odysseus retorts that Zeus, who is above them all, has directed the acts of the Greek leaders in their attempt to secure the sacred bow. In extenuation of his own course of action he declares: *Ζεὺς, . . . Ζεὺς, Ζεὺς ὁ δέδοκται ταῦθ' ὑπερετῶδεγώ* (*ib.* 989 f., cf. *ib.* 1415).

Zeus is *πανθ' ὀράων*, the all-seeing power (*O. C.* 704, 1086; *El.* 175, 659; *Ant.* 184; fr. adesp. 43, fr. 278). In *O. T.* 902 ff. he is appealed to as the highest divine power, the sole father of the eternal laws of righteousness, the source and upholder of lofty moral and religious standards. In like manner he is referred to (*Ant.* 450 ff., *O. T.* 865ff., *El.* 174ff., 209) as the supreme ruler of the universe. Zeus, together with his son and interpreter Apollo (*O.T.* 498ff.; *O.C.* 623, 792f.) alone knows the future⁸ (*O.C.* 882, fr. 590). The chorus in the

⁴ There was a cult statue of the Moirai, at Megara, placed beneath the head of Zeus; cf. Paus. I.40.3 and V.15.4. Moreover, *moirageles* was a cult name of Zeus at Olympia (Paus. V. 15.5.), at Delphi (*ib.* X.24.4), at Akkesion in Arcadia (*ib.* VIII. 37.1), and probably also at Athens (*C.I.A.* I.93).

⁵ From the beginning of the fifth century this tendency to emphasize the power of Zeus by representing fate as identical with his will, is noticeable in Greek literature: cf. Hdt. VII. 141.

⁶ Quoted by the schol. on Aes. *Ag.* 33 and by the schol. on Eur. *Or.* 603.

⁷ In ll. 354f. and 860f., however, Love is said to have brought about the ruin of the hero.

⁸ This is the usual doxology: cf. e.g. Thuc. 6.78. For a variation of the idea cf. Eur. *Med.* 1415.

Oedipus Tyrannus call upon the ἀθάνατον αἰὲν ἀρχάν of Zeus to vindicate the truth of the oracle (902ff.),⁹ which is his ἀδυεπῆς¹⁰ φάτις (*ib.* 151).¹¹ In the *Ajax* also Zeus, together with, is invoked with special fitness as the source of mysterious voices and rumors:¹² ἀλλ' ἀπερέκοι καὶ Ζεὺς κακὰν καὶ φοῖβος . . . φάτιν (*Aj.* 187). Each of the gods here mentioned is looked upon as an averter of evil,—Apollo in his character of προστάτης, and Zeus both in this character (i.e. as a guardian) and also as the supreme deity.

Of all the gods mentioned in these plays, Zeus is by far the most richly endowed with epithets. Some of these appear to be mere poetic fancies, others cult names. The cult epithet βασιλέως is expressed in *Tr.* 128 and is alluded to in *O.T.* 903f. where the chorus cry: ὁ κρατύνων εἴπερ ὄρθ' ἀκούεις / Ζεῦ πάντ' ἀγάσσων. Here the necessity of addressing a god by his right name is referred to. This implies the idea that the efficacy of prayer and of sacrifice is dependent upon the proper form of address to the god.¹³ There is also a touch of high religious feeling in these lines; viz. the idea that any epithet applied to the god is only a symbol, and that the great Unknown should choose his own form of address.

The preëminent position of Zeus is shown by many other epithets: παγκρατής (*Ph.* 680, fr. 684), δύψιστος (*Ph.* 1289, cf. also *Tr.* 1191), ἄναξ (*O.C.* 1485), πάνταρχος (*ib.* 1085), πάντοπτα (*ib.* 1085), ὁς πάντα κρατήνει (*El.* 174), πανδαμάτωρ δαίμων (*Ph.* 1467),¹⁴ ὁ πάντα κραίνων (*Tr.* 127). He is called πατρῶος (*ib.* 288 and 753) and also πατήρ (*Aj.* 1389, *Ph.* 1442, *O.T.*). This epithet is strengthened by the addition of the word πάντων in *Tr.*¹⁵ 275. Furthermore in Sophocles, as in Homer, Zeus as sovereign of Olympus is occasionally called Ὁλύμπιος (*Tr.* 275,

⁹ For a discussion of the connection of Zeus with the oracles at Dodona and elsewhere cf. Chap. on Oracles.

¹⁰ This epithet is, of course, propitiatory in tone.

¹¹ Cf. *Il.* II.93: *Od.* I.282, XXIV. 413.

¹² Possibly there may be an allusion in this passage to Zeus the all-oracular (*panomphaios*, *Il.* VIII. 250).

¹³ Cf. Oldenberg, *Vedareligion* pp. 310, 480f., 515ff.; Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, 1897, p. 213; Freudenthal, *Hell. Stud.*, II 172, Renouf, *Vorlesungen ueber Ursprung u. Entwicklung der Relig.* p. 181; Dieterich, ed. of Gk. papyri, *Abrazas* p. 22. 148.160; Ausfeld, *De Gr. precationib. quaest.*, p. 519.

¹⁴ It is evidently Zeus to whom these words apply, for it is his will that Heracles has come to announce (*Ph.* 1415). The epithet is particularly fitting here when used by Philoctetes, whose stubborn will has been overruled by Zeus.

¹⁵ In the *Aj.* and *Tr.* passages, there is a special allusion to the peculiar personal relation of the heroes to Zeus.

El. 209, *Aj.* 1389, *Ant.* 758, *O.T.* 967). His royal power is referred to also in fr. 345 and in *Ph.* 140, and the protection bestowed by him upon mortal kings is mentioned in *Ph.* 139ff.

The power of Zeus was assumed to extend over all nature, particularly over the forces of the sky¹⁶ (*Ant.* 174, *O.C.* 1466). As a sky-god he sends rain (*ib.* 1502). His original character as the sky-god¹⁷ is seen, likewise, in his connection with worship on hill-tops and on promontories (*ib.* 200); cf. his epithets *Κηραῖος* (*ib.* 238, 753) and *'Αθῶος* (fr. 237), and note also his connection with Mt. Oeta (*Tr.* 436). His epithet *Ολύμπιος* (*Ant.* 758) is likewise connected with this character of Zeus. In *O.C.* 1471 the chorus cry: ὁ μέγας αὐθερ, ὁ Ζεῦ. In exercising this function Zeus is said to be *μέγας οὐρανῷ* (*El.* 174) and he is called *ἡλιωπός*¹⁸ (fr. 470 and possibly fr. 26). As god of the sky and the daylight also he is addressed by Ajax (*Aj.* 709) at the coming of dawn. Zeus is the marshaller of the seasons (*Tr.* 607, *El.* 149), (though these are sometimes spoken of as being under the control of all the gods collectively,—*Ant.* 607). The lightning is ‘the flash of Zeux’ *Διὸς ἀκτίς*,—(*Tr.* 1085). The thunderbolts, the sign of Zeus in this connection, are frequently referred to (*ib.* 1086; *O.C.* 95, 1302, 1460ff., 1515; *O.T.* 202; *El.* 825, 1063f.). This character of the god is indicated likewise by the epithets: *πυρφόρος ἀστεροπετής* (*Ph.* 1198), *βαρυβρεμένης* (*Ant.* 1118), *πυρφόρων ἀστραπᾶν* (*O.T.* 200f.).¹⁹ The Locrian Zeus was worshipped especially as the thunderer (*Tr.* 436).²⁰ At the conclusion of a prayer for help during a thunder-storm, the chorus in *O.C.* 1485 call out the name of Zeus as god of thunder.

Again there are a number of passages in Sophocles referring to Zeus as giver of victory: cf. the prayers addressed to him for victory in fr. 887 and *O.C.* 1085. The usual epithet of Zeus in this character is *τροπᾶος* (*Ant.* 143). Thus, as giver of victory in war, this god receives *πάγχαλκα τέλη* (*ib.*). So we find Deianira praying to Zeus *τροπᾶος* to ward off the day of captivity from her offspring (*Tr.* 303).²¹

¹⁶ Cf. *Aes.* fr. 159. Cf. *Eur. Tro.* 78.

¹⁷ Cf. *Eur. Androm* fr. 114N.

¹⁸ For the connection of Helios with Zeus cf. sub-chapter on Helios.

¹⁹ Cf. sub-chap. on Helios, and Cook, *Zeus*, I. 186ff.

²⁰ The Locrian coins exhibit a thunderbolt.

²¹ This interpretation of the epithet is forcible in the light of the context; here Zeus has turned the armies of Oechalia before the power of Heracles, and the captives are standing in the presence of Deianira. (Cf. *Eur. El.* 671, *Supp.* 647). This is the

Zeus is, moreover, the protector of domestic relations. The duty of hospitality, pity for suppliants, and family affection were enforced by appeals to this god (the ἑφέστιος, ἐρκεῖος, ξένιαμος, ξένιος, ἵκέστιος Ζεύς). As the god who presides over the household he is called ἑφέστιος (*Aj.* 492) and ἐρκεῖος (cf. *Ant.* 487).²² As ξένιαμος he is the protector of those wronged by kindred (*ib.* 2, *El.* 126, 209f.). These epithets show this god's relation to the ethics of human duty.

A similar aspect of Zeus is that of protector of suppliants. As such he is called *ικέστιος* (*Ph.* 484). He is the one who hears the curses of rejected suppliants; cf. *ib.* 1082, where Philoctetes cries μὴ, πρὸς ἄραιον Διός, Θληγίς. Wrath against evil-doers in general in an attribute and prerogative of Zeus in this capacity, and the injured can rely upon him to inflict retribution (cf. *El.* 175ff.; *O.T.* 881, fr. 425). Even when there appears no help in man, there is still hope in Zeus (*El.* 174, *Aj.* 187); for he is *παυσίλυπος* (fr. 425), *σωτῆριος* (fr. 425), *ἀλεξήτωρ* (*O.C.* 143), and with him abide Mercy (*ib.* 1267f.) and Justice (*ib.* 1382).

Since Zeus was supposed to possess greatest power in all things, his name, as has been noted, was often appealed to in solemn oath. He is the guardian of oaths and the avenger of perjury and so is called *ὅρκιος* (*Ph.* 1324) and *ἐπάρμοτος* (*Tr.* 1188). Because Zeus is the mighty protector of good faith, worthy of the highest reverence (*Ph.* 1289),²³ the personified abstraction "Ορκος is said to be his servant (*O.C.* 1767). Zeus is also called *ἄγωνιος* 'supreme arbiter in all trials of strength' (*Tr.* 26), *πρεσβεῖων* (*Aj.* 1389), *Δωδωγαῖος* (fr. 423N) (*Tr.* 26, *El.* 174, 209), *ἱερός* (*O.T.* 18),²⁴ *χθονιος* (*O.C.* 1606), *ναῖος*²⁵ (fr. 455), and *μόριος*²⁶ (*O.C.* 705). Furthermore the epithet *τελεῖος*, while not actually expressed in Sophocles, is referred to in

view of Shilleto, of Jebb, and of Campbell. Others interpret the epithet as simply equivalent to *apoIropaios*.

²² Here the reference is to all who are in the house: i.e., the god's name is used to denote all that he protects. Cf. Eur. *Tro.* 16. *Hec.* 345.

²³ So also in Eur. *Supp.* 652. Cf. Chap. on Prayer.

²⁴ Cf. Chap. on the Chthonic Gods.

²⁵ This is an obscure title of Zeus, rare in literature. In several inscriptions the word appears in connection with the name of Zeus (cf. A. B. Cook, *C.R.* XX, p. 370). The usual explanation is that the word is connected with *Nao* 'to flow' (cf. fr. 170), and that it was first applied as an epithet to a local god worshipped at a fountain one which sprang from the foot of a sacred oak. (cf. O. Kern, *Pauly-Wiss.* VI. 61). Reinach, *Rev. Arch.* VI. 97ff., associates the word *naios* with *naos* ('temple').

²⁶ This epithet signifies 'protector of the sacred olive.'

the words: *τελεῖ, τελεῖ Ζέύς τι κατ' ἄμαρ* (*O.C.* 1079), and is likewise implied in frs. 524 and 1129.

Finally, in quite a large number of passages, the traditional mythology about Zeus is either referred to or explicitly stated. Thus in fr. 951 we are told that one cannot escape death even by flying *προς αὐλὰς Ζηνός*. The halls of Zeus in Olympus are gleaming with brightness (*Ant.* 610).²⁷ ‘Only in the gardens of Zeus is it possible to find happiness’ (fr. 320). Some of the god’s traditional emblems also are mentioned: the eagles are his hounds (fr. 884, *Ant.* 1041), the nightingale his messenger (*El.* 147),²⁸ and the oak likewise is sacred to him (*Tr.* 171, 1168). The god smites boasters with his brandished thunderbolts (*Ant.* 127ff.). In like manner as he is said to have punished Ixion for presumptuous conduct (*Ph.* 678ff.). The traditional parentage of Zeus is referred to in *Tr.* 127, 501, and in *Ph.* 680.

His lawful wife is said to be Hera (*Tr.* 1048). Yet Zeus is occasionally in these plays, as elsewhere in Greek literature and art, represented as polygamous. His many wives are evidence of so many local myths. He is called the father of Apollo (*O.C.* 623, 793; *O.T.* 470), of Artemis (*ib.* 159), of Athena (*O.C.* 1090; *Aj.* 91, 401, 902; *O.T.* 189, fr. 759N) of Dionysus (*Ant.* 1116 and 1149), and of Heracles (*Tr.* 19, 513, 567, 644, 827, 956, 1105, 1159, 1185; *Ph.* 801, 943). There are, besides, a number of references here to the amours of Zeus with mortals; he is said to have been the lover of Danae (*Ant.* 950), of Atlantis (fr. 261, 314), of Alkmene (*Tr.* 19, 1148, fr. 1127), of Semele (*Ant.* 116, 1139), of the daughter of Atlas (fr. 314,—l. 260). His passionate nature is referred to likewise in *Tr.* 443, 500 and fr. 941—l. 15. In fr. 1127 Zeus is pictured as coming to satisfy his lust in secret, not as a golden shower or as a swan, but in human form. Here the tone is more characteristic of Euripides²⁹ than of Sophocles;³⁰ for the morality of the old mythology is attacked in a virulent spirit of bitter criticism.

²⁷ These two passages (viz. fr. 951 and *Ant.* 610) might well be interpreted as references to the original nature of Zeus as god of the sky.

²⁸ These are insignia of Zeus in his character as lord of the sky and supreme over all.

²⁹ The mythological Zeus is not treated with great respect by Euripides: cf. *H.F.* 339ff., 718f., 869; fr. *Antiope* 210; *Tro.* 845f.; *Hip.* 451f.

³⁰ This fragment therefore has been rejected, as non-Sophoclean, by Dindorf, Nauck, and others. But Jebb considered it genuine, remarking that the whole tenor of the verses, though not befitting a tragedy, suits a satyr-play quite well. Cf. Pearson’s note on this issue.

TENDENCY TOWARDS MONOTHEISM

Such ideas of the supremacy of Zeus as those we have discussed, paved the way for the development of monotheistic ideas. Zeus remains to the end the supreme power of the old Greek religion, and frequently the expressions used regarding him might, if they stood alone, be interpreted as evidence of monotheism. In general, Sophocles represents this deity as merely the highest and most powerful of the gods. But not infrequently, as we have seen, Zeus is represented in a monotheistic way: i.e. his name appears to signify the Almighty Being.

There are, furthermore, some vague references to an indefinite god, where the anarthrous term *θεός* is used in a general sense and does not refer to any particular god.³¹ ‘Whatever *θεός* seeks, he himself will make clear,’ says Jocasta in *O.T.* 724f. Though the words are spoken by a character that has just uttered most scathing criticism of human prophesy. Moreover, when Deianira compares a young girl to a plant which neither the *θάλπος θεοῦ / οὐδὲ ὄμβρος οὐδὲ πνευμάτων οὐδὲν κλονεῖ* (*Tr.* 145f.), the word *θεοῦ*, though it might be interpreted as a reference to Zeus in his original character of sky-god, more probably is to be taken with reference to the Deity in general. The most indefinite expression of this sort is found in *O.T.* 879ff., where the chorus ‘beseech *θεός* to protect the state and to keep alive beneficial rivalry therein.’ How completely generalized such references in the fragments are, we cannot positively say; but some of them seem in no way specialized. Thus no particular god seems to be referred to in fr. 247, where it is said: ‘No one can find what is hidden by *θεός*.’ In fr. 871 this word may refer to Zeus as the general director of fate, but probably the Deity in general³² is meant. Greek piety showed a tendency thus to substitute indefinite terms, as *ὁ θεός* and *ὁ μένιστος θεός* for the particular personal names of the gods.

In the language of the fifth century, indeed, the notion of *θεός* had become enlarged so as to receive many applications outside the sphere of ordinary worship. When Sophocles speaks of Time as *εὑμαρῆς θεός* (*O.T.* 27), the deified abstraction is clear. In fr. 314

³¹ In a number of passages Sophocles does, however, thus refer to a particular god: *theos* refers to Apollo in *P.h.* 841 and 843, and to Persephone in *O.C.* 1556.

³² Cf. Farnell III, 137f. Usener’s theory (*Götter Namen*) of a primitive period of nameless Greek deities seems to rest on quite a frail basis.

C94 (i.e. *Ichn.* 94) the semi-chorus, in great excitement over the hunt cry: θεὸς, θεὸς, θεός. Here the reference is to ‘something divine’: i.e. the word is used impersonally.³³ There is a free use of the word also in fr. 922, where noble wisdom (*ἱ φρόγνοις ἀγαθή*) is called θεὸς μέγας. So, too, in *O.T.* 871, where the chorus say μέγας ἐν τούτοις θεός, the word is used to express an indwelling power, not exactly the deity *ipse*, but the divine power inherent in the deity.

Another term for the deity that is sometimes used impersonally by Sophocles is δαιμων. This is difficult to define, for its exact significance depends upon the particular context. Often the word is used in such a way as to be practically synonymous with θεός, from which it is distinguishable, if at all, as denoting “the divine power manifest in action, rather than the divine personality as an object of worship.”³⁴ Thus in *O.T.* 1258 and 1301 δαιμων is used in a vague way to designate, not a definite god, but some power above man. In *O.C.* 1766 the word denotes the divine power that called Oedipus away. In fr. 576 reference is made to the δαιμων pressing upon the scale of fortune. In the exclamations *ἰὼ δαιμων* (*Tr.* 1026, *O.T.* 1311,) and *αἴαν δαιμων* (*Ph.* 1185), the expression is more or less a stereotyped and impersonal cry.

APOLLO

For of all the Olympian deities mentioned by Sophocles,³⁵ Apollo appears nearest to Zeus in position and in power: cf. the choral hymn in *O.T.* 151ff. beginning *ὦ Διὸς ἀδεπτες φάτι*. Here he is represented as the son and mouth-piece of Zeus and the executor of his father’s will (*O.C.* 623, 793; *O.T.* 470; *Aj.* 186f.; fr. 313). We find the names of these gods closely linked together also in *O.C.* 623, where Oedipus foretells the destruction of amicable relations between Athens and Thebes. Apollo is, in a certain sense, the double of Zeus in his oracular power and as the vindicator of the wronged. In this aspect, as well as in oracular power, there appears such unification of purpose in Zeus and Apollo that their religion is practically a monotheism.³⁶

³³ Wilamowitz compares this with Eur. *Hel.* 560, a passage which shows that even an impersonal conception can be described as *theos*.

³⁴ Cf. Pearson, Hasting’s *Encyc.* IV. 591. The use of *daimon* as a term expressing a man’s lot is discussed in the chapter on fatalism.

³⁵ Cf. the schol. on *O.C.* 793. In the honor paid to the delphic god, as at many other points, Sophocles is intimately associated with Herodotus.

³⁶ Cf. Harrison, *J.H.S.* XIX. 251.

Again in *O.T.* 470 we are told of the oracular power of these two gods: δέ μὲν οὐγέ Ζεύς δέ τ' Ἀπόλλωνος ἔνεστοι καὶ τὰ βροτῶν / εἰδότες. Furthermore, Apollo is represented as armed with the fire and lightning of his father Zeus (*O.T.* 470).

Apollo is especially prominent throughout the *Electra* (cf. 32ff., 637ff., 1264, 1376ff., 1425). Two of the major reasons for the introduction of this god into the myth of Orestes in the versions between Homer and Sophocles,—viz., to oppose the claim of the Erinyes, and to give expiation to Orestes,—are no longer present in the Sophoclean version. Yet, in spite of this, Apollo is the very backbone of the play. Such a possibility of conflicting claims as those of Apollo and the Erinyes in the Aeschylean version of the myth is not admitted by Sophocles: with him the great laws of righteousness are eternal (cf. *Ant.* 450ff., *O.T.* 865ff.). Perhaps his wish to avoid such a conflict accounts for his more or less Homeric treatment of the myth. Here Sophocles presents a conjunction of the interests of Apollo and the Erinyes. They combine their powers in order to punish the insult to the Delphic oracle. Each new wrong done by a member of the house of Laius is represented as an embodied curse of the Erinyes.

In the *Oedipus Coloneus* we find Oedipus reconciled at last with both Apollo and the Erinyes (Eumenides or Semnai), though the hero's sons are still followed by the ancestral curse and expiate their folly by their death. Though doubted (*ib.* 1537) in the end, Apollo's oracle is triumphant here as in the other plays. In the *Trachiniae* also Apollo is prominent: for in this play the Delphic oracle sends warning to Heracles before his last venture (*ib.* 77).

Reference is made to a considerable number of the special aspects and functions of Apollo. He is god of dreams³⁷ (*El.* 644ff.), a pastoral god (*O.T.* 203, 1103f.; *O.C.* 1091), connected with the sea (*O.T.* 1047), a war god (*ib.* 469), a slayer of mortals (*P.H.* 334), yet also their protector (*Tr.* 208f.; *O.T.* 150; *El.* 636; *Aj.* 187, 701ff.). As a god of bright rejoicing, he is addressed in a hyporcheme by the chorus of Salaminian sailors (*ib.* 704f.). His epithet λόξιος ‘ambiguous utterer of oracles,’ is mentioned several times (*O.T.* 853, 994, 1103; *El.*

³⁷ Messer (*The Dream in Homer and Greek Tragedy*, Columbia Univ. Press, 1918, p. 4) argues that there is no dream divinity in classical Greek literature. Apollo is here (viz. *El.* 644ff.) addressed, indeed, not as the lord of the dream, but as a protector from the evils foreboded by it.

82; fr. 314 (*Ichn.*) l. 367; fr. 367, 434, 436). As the Pythian god of prophecy (*O.T.* 242) he is called ἐνόλμιος in fr. 942.

The harp, one of his common attributes, is mentioned in fr. 15.³⁸ While his bow is referred to by the epithets *τὸν εὐφαρέτραν* (*Tr.* 208) and *ἔκαβδον* (*O.T.* 163).³⁹ Another common epithet of Apollo is *Λυκεῖος* (*El.* 655, 1379; *O.T.* 203, 919), which must be ultimately traced to the root *λυκ*, as designating the god of light. But popular etymology connected it with *λύκος*, and in *El.* 655, Sophocles doubtless intended the word to be explained by *λυκοφόνος*, an epithet suitable to Apollo as the destroyer or protector of flocks and herds (*O.T.* 203). In Sophocles, Apollo Lycaeus, protector of his devotees, destroyer of their enemies (*El.* 7, 635) is not oracular nor closely connected with Delphi. This guardian god is called *προστάτης* (*Tr.* 209) or *προστατήριος* (fr. 370, *El.* 637),—rightly thus invoked by those within the house, as his altar stood by the door (cf. *El.* 635; *O.T.* 91, 919).

In *Ichn.* 97 (fr. 314) we have a reference to Apollo as god of colonization.⁴⁰ Though the exact allusion is uncertain, the god mentioned here is clearly Apollo *ἀρχηγέτης*. Apollo, as leader of adventurers, is referred to also in *El.* 82. In fr. 1024 Apollo is called *ἀργειφόντης*, the epithet commonly applied to Hermes.⁴¹ Moreover, like Hermes, he is named *ἀγρευτάς* (*O.C.* 1091) and *ἀκεικόμας* (fr. 112).

Apollo is also addressed as *ἄναξ* (*O.T.* 80, 96, 203; *El.* 635, 645; fr. 314-*Ichn.* 79; *Aj.* 704). Here (viz. *Aj.* 704ff.) the chorus invokes him to make manifest his divinity to men,—*εἴγγωστος*. *Φοῖβος*, the most common epithet of Apollo, occurs very often (*O.T.* 71, 96, 133, 149, 162, 279, 284, 712, 1097; *Ph.* 305, 333, 533, 788, 1011; *O.C.* 86, 414, 454, 793; *El.* 35, 637; fr. 956). So frequently, indeed, was this epithet of Apollo used by the Greeks that in Sophocles (as in many other Greek authors) it is applied to the god without the addition of the name Apollo.⁴²

³⁸ Hartung, Meineke, Nauck, Dindorf, and others have thought that the reading in this fragment is corrupt, as the Delphic oracles were delivered by the Pythia's voice. But, as Pearson points out, the responses were metrical and so would be accompanied by the harp. Cf. Gruppe *op. cit.* p. 125.

³⁹ This epithet is applied to Artemis in *Aes.* Sept. 449.

⁴⁰ Cf. Jebb's note and cf. also Farnell in *C. Qr.* IV. 81.

⁴¹ Cf. *Etym. Gr.* 185 s.v., Cramer *Anec. Par.* IV. 60.21, Farnell, 357 n.6 of contact in the worship of Apollo and Hermes, cf. O. Seeck, *Unberg. d. Antik-Welt* II 573.

⁴² Cf. Usener, *Götter Namen* 332.

One of the chief functions of Phoebus Apollo is that of healing, which is here designated by his epithet *παιάν* (e.g. *Tr.* 221). In *O.T.* 154ff. the ode to Delian Paean is evidently addressed to Apollo, whose oracular answer is here expected. And later in the same chorus (ll. 178-188) we note that the hymn of invocation to Apollo is really a petition to him as Paean. Here and in *Ichn.* 37 (fr. 314) there is the earliest identification of Paean and Apollo.⁴³ As a healer Apollo is invoked with the cry *iή* and is called *νόσου παυστήριος* (*O.T.* 154).

A purely mythological reference to this god as the servant of Pheres appears in fr. 330, while fr. 911 may refer to the myth about god's servitude in the house of Admetus. Apollo, according to tradition, is represented as the brother of Artemis (*O.C.* 1092, *Tr.* 212). Moreover, in the *Ichneutae* (fr. 314), the mythical relation of Apollo to Dionysus and the nymphs⁴⁴ and satyrs is represented. The amours of Apollo and the nymphs are referred to likewise in *O.T.* 1101 (if we adopt Arndt's conjecture *εὐνατέρα τις*, instead of the MSS reading *θυγάτηρ*).

The local epithet Delian is a familiar one in Sophocles, as elsewhere in Greek literature (e.g. *O.T.* 154, 162; *Aj.* 704). In fr. 955 we find reference to a rather vague locality, that is called *Φοίβου παλαιὸν κῆπον*.⁴⁵ Delphi is, of course, the chief locality referred to in connection with Apollo. There is also reference to his temple at Albae (*O.T.* 899).

HELIOS⁴⁶

The sun⁴⁷ is frequently personified and even deified in Sophocles. Somewhat obliterated is the personal image in *Ant.* 1065, *Aj.* 877, and *Ph.* 1330; not so in *Ant.* 100ff., *Tr.* 94, 606, and *Aj.* 857. There is frequent mention of man's natural joy in the light of the sun (*Ant.* 800f., 866f., *Aj.* 690, *El.* 1205), the divine (*O.T.* 660), warmth of god (*Tr.* 145). In *Ant.* 879 the light of the sun is called a *ἴερον δύμα*.⁴⁸ Another solar conception that has left its mark upon

⁴³ Cf. Usener, *ib.* 154.

⁴⁴ Cf. Farnell IV. 362, n. 21.

⁴⁵ According to Jebb, this region is the eastern sky. Pearson takes it to be the northern region to which, according to the myth, Boreas carried Orthia.

⁴⁶ As a matter of convenience and because of his identity with Apollo in the *Electra*, we will here consider Helios as one of the major Olympian gods.

⁴⁷ In fr. 786 there is likewise a personification of the moon.

⁴⁸ For the 'sacred eye' of the sun cf. Eur. *I.T.* 194, *Ion.* 1467.

Greek religion is that of a revolving wheel,⁴⁹—a conception that is seldom found in the literature, but is referred to occasionally in the drama,⁵⁰ possibly in *Ant.* 1065.⁵¹

In *Tr.* 96ff. and *Aj.* 846, 857, Helios is invoked to take upon himself the office of messenger. He is appealed to in a brief pathetic way for pity in fr. 752: "Ἡλίος, οἰκτῖποις ἐμέ. Again this god is supplicated as if he were all-powerful to bestow blessings or curses upon mortals (*O.C.* 868ff.). In fr. 535 he is associated with Hecate. Helios abhors impurity: his light is ἀγνόος (*El.* 87) and ἔρως (*Ant.* 879).⁵² In the *Electra* (637ff.; cf. *ib.* 424ff.), Clytemnestra prays to Helios-Apollo to dispel all causes of fear and foreboding aroused in her by evil dreams.⁵³ The address is made to this god either because he was a god of purity and light,⁵⁴ or because, as an 'all-seeing god' (cf. *O.C.* 869), he was thought to have the power of revealing the danger that might be foreshadowed by evil dreams, or perhaps, as the scholiast says, the appeal is made 'by expiation'.⁵⁵

In fr. 582 there is a special reference to the cult of this god in Thrace,⁵⁶ where he is said, not only to be worshipped but even to be most revered⁵⁷ of all the gods. Sun-worship seems to be referred to likewise in fr. 752, where Helios is addressed as γεννητὴν θεῶν <καὶ> πατέρα πάντων.⁵⁸ In *O.T.* 660 also there is an invocation to

⁴⁹ Cf. A. B. Cook, *Zeus* p. 197, n. 7.

⁵⁰ Cf. Ar. *Thesm.* 17, fr. 234.

⁵¹ All the MSS have *trachous* ('wheels'), but Jebb accepts Erfurdt's cj. *trachous* ('courses').

⁵² There is here, perhaps, a special reference to the local worship of the sun at Argos; for, according to Pausanias, an altar to the Sun-god stood on the way from Argos to Mycaenae.

⁵³ Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 7.60.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Od.* VIII 270.

⁵⁵ Another explanation for this custom of telling Helios the fears occasioned by evil dreams is that this god was generally regarded as a saving power; cf. Paus. 8. 31.7.

⁵⁶ This reminds us of the fact that Orphism, a Thracian religion, emphasized what was never an acknowledged part of the Olympian religion,—viz. worship of the heavenly bodies.

⁵⁷ The force of the epithet in this passage must not be overstressed; it may be merely a courteous form of address to a powerful god.

⁵⁸ Rapp (in Roscher I. 2024) thinks it improbable that this fragment was written by Sophocles, on the ground that sun-worship was a late development in Gk. thought (cf. Athen. 963). On the other hand, Farnell (V. 418) holds that the poet is here alluding to some religious speculation of his age in regard to the sun as the source of all life. cf. Ar. *Pac.* 410 and CIG. 2016d.

the sun as the most conspicuous of all the gods (*τῶν πάντων θεῶν θεὸν πρόμον*).⁵⁹ Among the other noteworthy epithets applied to this are ἄναξ (fr. 634, *O.T.* 1425), *προστατήριος* (*El.* 637), *δεσπότης* (fr. 535), δέ πάντα λεύσσων (*O.C.* 868).

ATHENA

Next to Zeus and Apollo, Athena is the prominent deity in the dramas. Her parentage is often referred to (*Aj.* 91, 401, 450, 952; *O.T.* 159, 187; *O.C.* 1090, fr. 844). Together with Artemis, Ares, and Dionysos, Athena is associated with Zeus and Apollo in a choral hymn of supplication (*O.T.* 151ff.). Here she is called ἀμβροτος (*O.T.* 159) and also χρυσέα⁶⁰ (*ib.* 187), epithets more commonly attributed to Aphrodite. The goddess of wisdom is invoked also in *Ph.* 132f., where Odysseus prays to Athena Polias, his savior. Her wisdom is mentioned further in fr. 361: "Αθηνᾶ⁶¹ φρόνησις⁶² οὐσα.

Pallas, the familiar epithet of the goddess, is found a number of times in Sophocles (*Ant.* 1184; *O.T.* 20; *Aj.* 952; *Tr.* 1031; *O.C.* 107, 1090). This term is sometimes used as an independent epithet of the goddess (i.e. without the name Athena): e.g. *Tr.* 1031, where Heracles cries—ὦ Παλλὰς, παλλὰς.⁶³ But γλαυκῶπις, so frequent in Homer, occurs only once in Sophocles (*O.C.* 706). Instead of this γοργῶπις, a word usually descriptive of the Erinyes, is applied to

⁵⁹ Here and in fragment 752 Helios may be considered as one aspect of Zeus. In the words of the ancient commentator Aratus (ap. Patavium 151): Sophocles calls Zeus the sun. Whether or not we accept this identification as a fact, certainly Zeus and Helios are coupled in the Theban chorus's cry of despairing agnosticism in *El.* 823f. In Amorgos there was a double worship of Zeus-Helios (cf. C.I.G. 4604, *Bull de Corr. Hell.*, 1882, p. 191, *Anth. Pal.* 7.85). Farnell (I.44), however, says: "Here and there Zeus may have attracted a myth or absorbed a cult that belonged to Helios, but in the main religion of the people his figure is entirely distinct. Solar mythology may endeavor to explain Apollo, Heracles and others, but must relinquish Zeus."

⁶⁰ This epithet ('golden') is mentioned as a cognomen of Athena in the schol. in *Il.* 2.725.

⁶¹ The form *Athana* appears nine times in Sophocles, viz. *Aj.* 14, 91, 112, 757; *O.T.* 159; *O.C.* 706, 1051, 1090; *Ph.* 134.

⁶² On such allegorical interpretations cf. F. Wipprecht, *Zur Entwicklung der Rationalistischen Mythendeutung bei den Griechen*, T bungen, 1902.

⁶³ Athena is often represented in myth as the guardian goddess of her half-brother in his hardships and adventures (e.g. cf. *Il.* VIII 367ff.). Many black figured vases also illustrate this relationship (cf. Dümller, Pauly-Wiss. II 1193, and O. Jahn, *Archaeol. Aufs.* 82ff.).

to Athena (*Aj.* 450 fr. 844). In the *Ajax* passage it is significant, perhaps, that the epithet is applied to the goddess in anger,⁶⁴ but in fr. 844 the word seems to be used merely as a cult epithet.⁶⁵ This goddess was held in the highest respect, as is shown by the various terms of honor and reverence applied to her: *δῖα* (*Aj.* 402, 757, 771, 952), *ἄνασσα* (*ib.* 774), *δεινή* (*ib.* 952), *ἄλκιμα* (*ib.* 402), *ἄμβροτος* (*O.T.* 159), *μεγίστη* (*O.C.* 107), *σέμνα* (*ib.* 1090). Her virginity is indicated by the terms *α'δάματος* (*Aj.* 450) and *ἀστεργή* (*ib.* 776). In fr. 643 we find the mysterious word *δράκανδος*, a ἄπαξ λεγόμενον which Jessen⁶⁶ and Gruppe⁶⁷ take as a title of Athena.

Athena is associated with her father Zeus in protecting the sacred olives (*O.C.* 703ff.).⁶⁸ In fr. 844 we find mention of her cult epithet *ἐργάνη*, under which she was worshipped at Athens and elsewhere, as goddess of spinning and other arts and crafts.⁶⁹ Three other cult epithets⁷⁰ that are especially characteristic of Athena as patron of Athens are mentioned here: *πολιάς* ('Αθάνα πολιάς, η σώζει μ' ἀεὶ *Ph.* 134) denotes the goddess as guardian of the citadel, the city, and in fact the whole land: *iππία* (*O.C.* 1070), a title under which she appears like a Walküre, refers to her contest with Poseidon, and marks her close connection with this god; while *νίκη* (*Ph.* 134), another martial epithet, is the title under which this goddess was worshipped in the beautiful little temple on the Propyleum.

But the Sophoclean Athena is not always represented in a favorable light: she is partial (*Aj.* 34, 952: *Ph.* 132), wrathful (*Aj.* 754; *Ph.* 194),⁷¹ tricky (*Aj.* 89, 115; *Ph.* 133) and derisive (*ib.* 79).

⁶⁴ Of the help given her favorite by Athena (cf. *Ph.* 134) and of her stern attitude towards the unfortunate Ajax, we have spoken elsewhere; cf. the chapter on Attitude towards the Gods.

⁶⁵ Cf. C.I.G. 6280B and Roscher *lex.* I, 678

⁶⁶ Cf. Pauly-Wiss. V. 1646.

⁶⁷ Cf. Gruppe, *Gr. Myth.* 808.

⁶⁸ There is a special reason for the conjunction here of the names of Athena and Zeus; for there was an altar to Zeus nearby Colonus, in the academy, and also a shrine to Athena (cf. Apollodorus ap. schol.).

⁶⁹ Cf. Paus. 1.24.3; Roscher *lex.* I p. 681; Pearson n. on fr. 844.

⁷⁰ Cf. Paus. I. 22.4; III. 15.7; V. 26.6.

⁷¹ It is a much disputed question whether the goddess Chyrse referred to here is to be taken as one form of Athena. Such an identification is made by the schol. on this 1. as well as on *Ph.* 1326 and *Il.* II 722. Some modern scholars accept this identification, while others deny it.

ARTEMIS

The cult of Artemis, another prominent divinity, was intimately connected with that of other gods. Her worship as a nature goddess is referred to in fr. 309, where she is connected with the Charities. Fire and brightness seem to be especially associated with her. Thus in *Tr.* 214 she is called ἀμφιπύρος,⁷² an epithet that is explained by *O.T.* 206f. Here we have a picture of the goddess darting with flashing torches through the Lycian hills.⁷³ These passages (viz. *Tr.* 214 and *O.T.* 206f.) and also fr. 490 serve to mark her connection with Selene or Hecate.⁷⁴ The words ὡ χρονέα θιγατερ (ib. 187) also may refer to Artemis in her character as lunar goddess. Likewise her identification with Selene as possibly suggested by her epithet as the schol. on *Aj.* 172 suggests. As a lunar goddess, she was thought to extend her guardianship over women, especially in childbirth (cf. *O.T.* 160ff.).

This mention of the Lycian hills serves further to mark the connection of Artemis with her brother and counterpart. Sophocles calls her κασιγνήτην Ἀπόλλωνος (*O.C.* 1092) and δμοσπορον Ἀπόλλωνος (*Tr.* 212). Her connection with Apollo⁷⁵ is especially close in the paenans in which she is associated with him (*Tr.* 208ff., *O.T.* 151ff.). Note the force of the words διπλᾶς ἀρωγας⁷⁶ in *O.C.* 1094. Not only Apollo, but Artemis also is called ἐκηβόλος (fr. 401,—an epithet which, like χρυσηλάκατος (*Tr.* 637), may refer to her character as a death-goddess.⁷⁷ Like Apollo also, she is represented as a preserver as well

⁷² Wiener (*Rh. Mus.* LVIII. 333) explains this epithet as a reference to the division of the month into two parts.

⁷³ Ar. *Ran.* 1362. Cf. Paus. 2.31.4. 8.15.4.

⁷⁴ Cf. Chap. on Hecate.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Il.* XVI 183, XX 70 and schol.

⁷⁶ For the parallels in the cult of Artemis and that of Apollo, cf. Ed. Meyer in Roscher I 582ff. and Wernicke in Iw. Müller II. 235.

⁷⁷ The story of Iphigenia, dramatized by all three of the great Gk. tragedians, preserves a relic of evidence that human sacrifice was once offered to this goddess. She is actually called chthonic in schol. ad Theoc. II. 12. As we have mentioned above, Artemis is identified with Hecate sometimes, especially by the fifth century Greek poets,—e.g. Aes. *Supp.* 678, Eur. *Tro.* 323; cf. Farnell *G.C.* II. 509ff. Moreover, Artemis is sometimes represented with a torch (cf. *O.T.* 206f., *Tr.* 214), and Diels (*Sibyll. Bl.* p. 47) shows that the torch was especially connected with chthonic worship, not only for the purpose of illumination, but also for illustration (cf. e.g. Eur. fr. 472).

as a destroyer of life (cf. *O.C.* 1092, fr. 401. Her cult,⁷⁸ like his, was often established on the summit of a hill or mountain, as we see from *O.T.* 206. This characteristic of her worship is further suggested by the epithet ἀκονχεῖ in a fragment of the lost *Iphigenia* (fr. 309). Like Apollo, too, she is associated with bright arrows (*O.T.* 207, fr. 401).

The relation of Artemis to other gods is likewise frequently referred to by Sophocles. Together with the celestial triad,—Zeus, Athena and Apollo,—Artemis is addressed by the Theban chorus in the parados of the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. She is called child of Zeus (*Aj.* 172) and of Leto (fr. 401, *El.* 570) and sister of Athena (*O.T.* 160). The birth of Artemis on the island of Delos is referred to by the epithet ὄρτνυτα⁷⁹ (*Tr.* 212). Like Athena and Hestia, she is represented as a virgin goddess; cf. *El.* 1239, where she is called τὴν α'δήμητον αἰέν.

Moreover the power and dignity of Artemis are marked by various titles: βασίλεια (fr. 310), δε'σποινα⁸⁰ (*El.* 637), δήμουχος (*O.T.* 160), γαιάχος (*ib.* 161); so, too, in *Tr.* 637 and in *El.* 570, she is called κόρα. Furthermore the words πυκνοστίκτων ὅπαδον / ὡκυπόδων ἐλάφων (*O.C.* 1092f.), Λύκι' ὄρεα διάσσει (*O.T.* 208), κύνακος (*El.* 563), ἐκήβολος (fr. 401) and χρυσαλάκατος (*Tr.* 208) mark the goddess as a huntress.

As the tutelary deity of animals, Artemis is identified with the Asiatic Πότνια θηρῶν. A reference to her protection of deer is made in (*O.C.* 1092f.) while in *Tr.* 214 Artemis is called ἐλαφάβολος. Moreover her cult epithet ταυροπόλα (*Aj.* 172) implies, to some extent at least, to her character as mistress of bulls. There were two cults of Artemis, which were originally quite distinct, the ταυροπόλα and the ταυρικὴ. Perhaps Sophocles was thinking only of the former here, and mentions it simply because bulls had been among the victims slain by Ajax. But the fierce and bloody onslaught of the hero might well be considered as sufficient for suggesting the other Artemis cult, which was celebrated with wild bacchanalian rites:

⁷⁸ Cf. Eur. *I.T.* 126; Paus. 2.24.5; 2.25.3; 2.28.2; 8.15.9.

⁷⁹ This word is used here, perhaps, merely as a standing epithet. It is associated with various places (cf. Apoll. Rhod. I 419, Strabo 14. 639) but most frequently with Delos. Another explanation of the word is that it means 'abounding in quails.' Preller (I. 238) supposes that this epithet question is an open one. Cf. A. B. Cook *Zeus* p. 543, n.6.

⁸⁰ Often so called; cf. Aes. fr. 342; Eur. *Hipp.* 228, 1324, 1395; Philemon II. 495; C.I.A. II. 216.

as the madness of the hero might not unreasonably be supposed to have been caused by the *ταυρική* goddess,⁸¹ who inspired frenzy.

Mention has already been made of the appeal to Artemis in oaths by women (cf. e.g. *El.* 627, 1239).⁸² There is, furthermore, a reference to the special worship of Artemis at Aulis (*ib.* 564ff.), at Artemesium⁸³ (*Tr.* 636), and also at Thebes. In this place (i.e. thebes) she is represented by Sophocles (*O.T.* 160f.) as patron goddess occupying a very distinguished⁸⁴ seat in the agora (*ἀγορᾶς θρόνον εὐκλέα*). Her shrine there may have been of a circular shape (cf. the epithet *κυκλόεντ'*,—*ib.*). This passage is an allusion to her title as protectress of civil and political life.⁸⁵

APHRODITE

Aphrodite, chiefly in the form of a deified abstraction, is frequently referred to in Sophocles. Like Dionysus (cf. *Ant.* 1115) she is many-named (*πολλῶν, Λδνοματων* fr. 941). In view of the effect of her power she is occasionally, as in this fragment, classed as a goddess of death and called Hades.⁸⁶ Sometimes the poet makes it quite clear that, not a deity, but only a personification of human passion is referred to under the concrete name of this goddess: ‘She is immortal strength, raging madness, passion, lamentation: she is all-powerful over beasts and men and gods, and that too without the aid of sword or iron’ (fr. 361, cf. fr. 874).⁸⁷ The divinity is here strikingly represented as a diffused pantheistic power, not as a personal god. This power over the gods, even over Zeus, is mentioned also in

⁸¹ Cf. Jebb, Lobeck, Schneidewin, who concur in this opinion. C. A. Manning, in his article “the Tauric Maiden and Allied Cults, *T.A.P.A.*, 1920, 40ff. makes clear how difficult it is to explain satisfactorily the various cults of Artemis.

⁸² Cf. Ar. *Med.* 160, *Lys.* 435, 992, *Thesm.* 517, *Eccl.* 84.

⁸³ Perhaps the reference in *Tr.* 636 is to the worship of Artemis along all the shore from Thermopolae to Anticyra; cf. notes of Schneidewin and Jebb. The goddess was worshipped under the title *limenoskopos*.

⁸⁴ Possibly a reference to her cult epithet *agoraiā*; cf. Paus. 5.15.4.

⁸⁵ Under this title, as protectress of civil and political life, Artemis was worshipped by the Locrians, Boeotians, etc.; cf. Plut, *Arist.* 20, and Xen. *Hellen.* 4.6.2.

⁸⁶ There is a certain amount of evidence elsewhere in Gk. literature pointing to the worship of Aphrodite as a goddess of death; e.g. her title *epitumbia* at Delphi (Plut. 2, 269b). cf. Gruppe, *Gr. Myth.* 1358 and Bursian, *Jahresb.* CXXXVII 400. The goddess was addressed as *androphonos* at Pharsalus (cf. Farnell, II. 665) and she is said to have been the recipient of *nephelia* (cf. Polemon in schol. on *O.C.* 100).

⁸⁷ Herwerden, Meineke, and Nauck ascribe this fragment to Euripides rather than to Sophocles. Not so Pearson.

frs. 345 and 864; *Tr.* 443ff., 497; *Ant.* 787. Both the last mentioned passages (i.e. *Tr.* 497 and *Ant.* 787) are parts of choruses whose motif is the power of love, called *κύπρις* (*Tr.* 497), or *'Ερως* (*Ant.* 781), or *'Αφροδίτη* (*ib.* 800). In fr. 770 also there is reference to the inexorable power of some god, probably Aphrodite. Moreover, the expression *κακὰ νόσου* in fr. 680 is probably a reference to this inevitable power. ‘Whoever opposes Love, the boxer, is not wise, (*Tr.* 441f.): for ‘Love is unconquerable’ (*ib.* 498; *Ant.* 781, 800), ‘a wrestler that cannot be thrown’ (fr. 618). The great destructive power of Aphrodite is referred to likewise in *Tr.* 860 and *Ant.* 795. Furthermore, in *Tr.* 515 Aphrodite, or Cyprus as she is here called, is represented as presiding over a love contest.

Besides her common titles Cyprus and Cytheria, Aphrodite has the following epithets in Sophocles: *ἀμάχος* (*Ant.* 800), *ἀμφίπολος* (*Tr.* 860), *εὐλεκτρος* (*ib.* 515), *χρυσάνιος* (*O.C.* 693). In fr. 941, l. 11 there seems to be an allusion to a winged form of the goddess, though no trace of a winged aphrodite is found elsewhere. Again, in fr. 849, she is conceived of as a giver of fertility and is referred to as *εὔκαρπος*.⁸⁸ Furthermore, we should note that Aphrodite is mentioned by Sophocles as a patron deity of Colonus (*O.C.* 692).

ARES

Like Aphrodite, Ares is frequently mentioned in such a way as to make it clear that the god’s name is used to represent merely an abstract power.⁸⁹ His personality is, indeed, comparatively unimportant for the social and religious history of Greece. Though primarily the name does indicate the god of war, any hostile or deadly influence may be called Ares (e.g. fr. 838, where blind fury is so styled). In *O.T.* 189 Ares is represented, not as the war-god, but as the personified spirit of pestilence, which is here distinguished from the spirit of war by the words *ἄχαλκος ἀσπιδων*.⁹⁰ Then, having

⁸⁸ There is little evidence to show that Aphrodite was especially honored as a goddess of vegetation cf. Hes. *Th.* 194, Roscher I. 397, Farnell II. 643. We find only slight traces of a cult connection with Demeter; cf. Dümller in Pauly-Wiss. 2736, and Jebb on *O.C.* 692.

⁸⁹ On the metanomic use of the names Aphrodite, Ares, Hephaestus, etc., cf. Reichenberger, *Die Entwicklung des Metanomischen Gebrauchs- von Gotternamen*, Karlsruhe, 1891.

⁹⁰ Schneidewin (ed. Soph., n. ad hoc. loc.) says that these words mark the personification of the plague as distinct from the actual god. In *O.T.* 27 also the pestilence is represented as Ares, but it is in that case less distinctly identified with the god.

called the pestilence Ares, the poet is able to use the expression *περιβόητος* (*ib.* 191),⁹¹—a term which, though quite suitable to a god of war delighting in tumult, is not applicable to the pestilence itself.⁹² Considered as an evil deity sent to wither the Theban land, Ares is also called ‘ravening’ (*μάλερον*), an epithet especially used with reference to the destructive forces of fire. Likewise in *Aj.* 706, where the chorus speak of Ares as having loosed a terrible woe, Ares signifies unnatural death or destruction,⁹³ with an association of the violent rage and discord with which all these troubles of Ajax began.

Every kind of destructive agency was supposed to proceed from Ares (cf. e.g. *O.T.* 27, *Tr.* 653), as from a sinister and malignant influence.⁹⁴ As a god of strife, he is invoked in *O.C.* 1391. Likewise in *Aj.* 252 Ares is identified with violent death, especially implying the onslaught of battle *O.C.* 1679.⁹⁵ As such, the god might well be called chthonic.⁹⁶ In this character (viz., as a god of violent and sudden death) he is mentioned twice by the chorus in the *Electra* φοινία δὲ χείρ στάζει θυέλῆς "Αρεος (1421f.) δυσέριστον αἷμα φυσῶν "Αρης (l. 1384). And Electra, in speaking of her father, thus suggests a contrast between the common and honorable end of a soldier’s life, with the treacherous one prepared for him in his own home: φοίνιος "Αρης οὐκ ἔξερισεν, / . . . σχίζοντι κάρα φοινίῳ πελέκει (96 ff.). Again, in *Aj.* 1196, the deadly nature of war is referred to as κοινόν "Αρη. At times the term Ares signifies merely a personification of battle (e.g. *O.C.* 1046, *Ant.* 125, 139).

Ares, as the strong trace-horse of battle, is said to apportion various fates to the combatants (*Ant.* 139). He is said to direct his fatal force particularly against the noble and good: (fr. 649). Moreover he ‘breathes the spirit of bloodshed and contention’ in the person of Orestes (*El.* 1385). Even a spirit of bravery is sometimes described as Ares: δεινὸς ὁ προσχώρων (*O.C.* 1065); κάν γύναιξιν ως "Αρης ἔγεστιν (*El.* 1244). Yet this spirit of valor (Ares), the

⁹¹ This is the reading of L.

⁹² Perhaps the reference is to the cries of lamentation occasioned by the plague: i.e. the word may have a causative meaning.

⁹³ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 1510f.

⁹⁴ Not only the planet, but the god himself was supposed to exercise such an influence. Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* I. 19.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 1616, *P.V.* 860.

⁹⁶ Cf. Artemidor. *Oneisocrr.* 2.34.

embodiment of strength, cannot overcome the power of fate (*Ant.* 952, fr. 256, Tr. fr. adesp. 129).

Ennyalios, mentioned in *Aj.* 179, is either merely another epithet of Ares or is used absolutely as his name. This term is doubly fitting here, both because of the reference to Tauric Artemis in 178,⁹⁷ and because Ennyalios was especially revered in Salamis, the hero's home.⁹⁸ The following epithets also are applied to this god by Sophocles: ἀγχίπολις⁹⁹ (*Ant.* 970), δεξιόσειρος (*ib.* 139), θύριος (*Aj.* 612), κουώς (*ib.* 1196), λιθόλευστος (*ib.* 254), μέγας (*Ant.* 139), οἰστρηθεῖς (*Tr.* 653), φοίνιος (*El.* 96), ἄπιμος ἐν θεοῖς (*O.T.* 215).¹⁰⁰ In *O.C.* 1046 χαλκοβόας cannot be two separate epithets, 'brass-clad' and 'clamorous': it seems rather to mean 'with noise of brass,'—the clatter of shields and swords in battle (cf. *O.T.* 190, where the death-god is ἄχαλκος ἀσπίδων yet περιβόατος).

HERA

Although Hera belonged to the pantheon of the great gods, there are almost no reference to her in Sophocles, and those we find are chiefly mythological. This fact is not surprising, however, inasmuch as the cult of Hera was not especially prominent at Athens. There seems to have been no temple sacred to the goddess in that city: till the time of Hadrian,¹⁰¹ unless we count as Athenian the temple of Hera on the way from the Phaleron to Athens.¹⁰²

In fr. 314, l. 264, there is mention of a goddess, probably Hera, who is mentioned by name in l. 260 as the one from whom the existence of the infant Hermes must be concealed. Heracles also is represented as a cause of wrath to this goddess, who is the legitimate consort of Zeus (ἄκοττος ἡ Διός,—*Tr.* 1048).¹⁰³ The Heraeum at

⁹⁷ According to Pol. 8.91, the Athenian Polemarch made annual sacrifices to Artemis and to Ennyalios.

⁹⁸ Cf. Plu. Sol. 9 and Pol. 8.9. The meaning of the word *Ennyalios*, which is perhaps Thracian in origin, is quite unknown.

⁹⁹ I.e. 'neighboring to Thracian Salmydessus.' In *Il.* 13.301, etc., Ares is represented as having his home in Thrace. There may also be a reference here to some local shrine.

¹⁰⁰ This expression recalls *Il.* 5.31, etc. Cf. also the phrase applied to the Erinies in Aes. *Eum.* 644.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Paus. I. 18.9.

¹⁰² Cf. *Ib.* I.5.10.

¹⁰³ Cf. *Il.* 14.253. 18.119, Eur. *Her.* 1303.

Thebes is mentioned as ὁ κλεινὸς ναός in *El.* 8 and is alluded to in fr. 270¹⁰⁴ as Ἡρας πάγοις.

HEPHAESTUS

Of Hephaestus, likewise, there is very little mention in the plays and fragments.¹⁰⁵ He played but a small part in the religious life of the Greek people and the literary references to him are largely either mythological or metaphorical. In fr. 156 there is stereotyped reference to the making of the arms of Achilles by the art of Hephaestus.

The figure of this god is quite clear in its significance: in *Ant.* 123 e.g., a torch of fir-wood is called Hephaestus. The whole volcanic island of Lemnos was sacred to this god: so the flame of the volcano is called 'Ηφαιστοτέμπευκτος'¹⁰⁶ (*Ph.* 987). It is noteworthy, moreover, that the sacrificial fire is considered sacred to Hephaestus not Hestia. The seer says: ἐκ δὲ θυμάτων / Ἡφαιστος οὐκ ἔλαμπεν (*Ant.* 1006f.). Whether this expression indicates a case of survival, a relic of pre-anthropomorphism in Greek religion (where a natural object was thought to be mysteriously animated by divine power), or whether it is merely an intentional metaphor, cannot be definitely settled.

HESTIA

In Sophocles Hestia is but a shadowy figure.¹⁰⁷ This representation of the hearth goddess is in accordance with the general facts regarding her worship. For scarcely at any period, even when the imagination of the poets and artists caused anthropomorphic law to be most widely operative in Greece, was Hestia in a distinctly personal divinity.¹⁰⁸ The significance of her cult is quite transparent, and its origin is not so obscured as that of other gods. For clearly she is one of those 'departmental gods' who presided over certain sections

¹⁰⁴ As all Argos was under the special patronage of Hera (cf. Hclid. 349, *Phoen.* 1365, etc.). perhaps, as Pearson suggests, it is unnecessary to restrict the reference to the Heraeum.

¹⁰⁵ Pearson (I 110 and II 8) thinks that there is some reason for believing that Hephaestus played a prominent part in the lost *Daedalus* and *Kedaium*, and possibly also in the *Oenomaus* (II. 124).

¹⁰⁶ The scholiast here supposed that this epithet refers to Hephaestus working on his forge within the mountain. But, as Jebb says, this suggestion is rather far-stretched.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Prenner in Roscher's *lex. s.v. Hestia.*

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Farnell, *Gr. and Bab.*, p. 941.

of human life. She played no leading part, however, in directing the life of the family or of the state. She was remembered but vaguely in ritual ceremonies as well as in general religion.¹⁰⁹

It is said¹¹⁰ that in one of the last plays (cf. fr. 615) our poet identified Hestia with Ge, the mother of the gods. But that he ever really made this identification is by no means certain. Hestia is clearly addressed, however, as the 'prow (or forepart) of the libation' (*πρῷα λοιβῆς*, fr. 726), as at every sacrifice in the home the first libation was made to the goddess of the hearth. This is the only definite reference to the goddess in these plays. Elsewhere in Sophocles the religion of the hearth is connected almost exclusively with Zeus ἐρκεῖος or Zeus ἐφέστιος.

The hearth itself (the impersonal hestia) was a very important factor in Greek religion. Great reverence was accorded this sacred center of family life,¹¹¹ and an oath on one's ancestral hearth (*μὰ τὴν πατῶν ἑστίαν*) was sure to be highly respected (*El.* 881). Even the holy Delphic oracle was frequently called a hearth (e.g. Πυθμαντινήστια, *O.T.* 965; Δελφικῆστια *Tr.* 658).

POSEIDON

Poseidon was the only one of the sea gods who belonged to the great Olympian council. In fr. 506 we find the name of the god given in the form *Ποσειδεῖος* (genitive),—a stem-variation due probably to vowel gradation. The epic forms *Ποσειδώνιος* (*O.C.* 1494) and *Ποσειδάων* (*Tr.* 502) are also used by Sophocles. Like Homer,¹¹² Sophocles celebrates the power of this god with the epithets μέγας (*O.C.* 708), τινάκτωρ γαῖας (*Tr.* 502), and γαιάοχας¹¹³ (*O.C.* 1072). Σέμνις (*ib.* 55) and ἄναξ (*ib.* 713), titles of respect and honor, are likewise applied to Poseidon; and his reign over the sea is referred to by the epithets πόντιος (*ib.* 1071) and ἐνάλιος (*ib.* 888, 1493). The antistrophe of the second stasimon of this play (i.e. *O.C.* 707ff.) is devoted to praise of Poseidon,—the god who introduced the use of the horse into Attica, and who taught the people the use

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Farnell, *Gk. Cults*, V. 355.

¹¹⁰ For the identification of Hestia with the mother of the gods, cf. Eur. fr. 944; Philodem., *de piet.* p. 23; Suess in Pauly-Wissowa VIII. 1295.

¹¹¹ e.g. Eur. *Alc.* 737.

¹¹² Cf. e.g. *Il.* 8. 200.

¹¹³ This is most probably to be interpreted in the Homeric sense as 'earth-shaker,' though it might be interpreted in the local sense as 'guarding the land.'

of oars. These two great functions attributed to Poseidon (viz., mastery of horses and lordship of the sea) are referred to by the words *εὐππον* and *εἰθάλασσον* (*ib.* 711), which are emphasized by their juxtaposition. As the *ἴππιος* and *θαλάσσιος* god, Poseidon was especially dear to the Athenians,¹¹⁴ hence the application of these epithets to the god in this passage is particularly fitting. In fr. 371 we find a reference to this god as holding sway over lofty crags and sheltered coves.¹¹⁵ His altar and sacred precinct at Colonus are mentioned several times in the *Oedipus at Colonus* (ll. 55, 888, 1157, 1493).

The traditional relation of Poseidon to Rhea and Cronos is mentioned in ll. 712 and 1073; while in *Tr.* 500ff. he is classed with Zeus and Hades (the other sons of Cronos) as a captive to Cypris. So also, according to tradition, Poseidon is represented as the builder of the walls of Troy (fr. 506).

¹¹⁴ Cf. Farnell I. 45f.

¹¹⁵ There were celebrated temples of Poseidon at Soumion (now C. Colonna), Geraistion (now C. Mandili), and other promontories. The worship of Poseidon on promontories was often connected with the existence of a harbor or refuge in the neighborhood. Cf. Eur. *Cycl.* 290ff., Ar. *Eq.* 560f. Gruppe 1158, and n. in *Berl. Phil. Woch.*, Sept. 2nd, 1899 p. 1087.

VIII. CHTHONIC GODS

One of the main features of ancient Greek religion was the worship of soul deities, spirits of the dead, and subterranean nature deities.¹ All these divinities were believed to have more or less power to benefit or injure. Their worship was, therefore, punctiliously observed. In the case of many of them, indeed, their malevolent character appears predominant. Such powers of darkness received prayers and sacrifices because of the fear they inspired in their votaries.²

These *χθόνιοι*, or gods of the underworld (*οἱ κάτω θεοί*—*El.* 294, *οἱ κάτωθεν θεοί*—*Ant.* 1070, *οἱ νέρπεροι θεοί*—*ib.* 601, 749), hold an important place in the works of Sophocles, who frequently mentions their powers and their functions regarding both the dead and the living. These soul gods are especially concerned with the cause of the murdered (cf. e.g. *El.* 110ff.). Naturally the chthonic character of the vegetative divinities is quite pronounced. Of the deities³ commonly associated with Olympians, Zeus (*O.C.* 1606), Demeter (*ib.* 1558), and Hermes (*El.* 111) each specifically receive the epithet chthonic in Sophocles. As noted above,⁴ Apollo (cf. *Ph.* 334, *O.T.* 469), Artemis (cf. *Tr.* 637, fr. 401, n. 193). Aphrodite (cf. fr. 941, n. 218) Ares (cf. *Aj.* 252, *O.C.* 1391, n. 227) and especially Dionysus (cf. *O.C.* 1051, *Ant.* 1115, 1120, 1154, fr. 759, n. 205) also have chthonic aspects.

¹ Among the most important books on the nature of chthonic cult are: Farnell, *Gk. Cults* (1896-1897), Harrison, *Prog. to the study of Gk. religion.* (1903); Rohde, *Psyche* (1907); Fairbanks *Hdbk. of Gk. Relig.* (1910); Ridgeway, *Origin of Trag.* (1910); Murray, *Four Stages of Gk. Relig.* (1912); Moore, *Relig. thought of the Gks.*, (1916).

² The cult of such divinities was of a placatory or apotropaic character, the formula being 'do ut abeas' (cf. Harrison Proleg. 3ff.)

³ The *chthonioi*, as have mentioned above, play but an obscure part in the Homeric poems, and throughout all Greek literature are comparatively ignored in the interest of the Olympian gods; cf. Dieterich, *Mutter erde*, p. 36; Dineker ap. Roscher I 2452.

⁴ Cf. discussion of the references to the Olympian gods. As noted above, Apollo (cf. *Ph.* 334, *O.T.* 469,), Artemis (cf. *Tr.* 637, fr. 401, n. 193). Aphrodite (cf. fr. 941, n. 218), Ares (cf. *Aj.* 252, *O.C.* 1391, n. 227), and especially Dionysus (cf. *O.C.* 1051, *Ant.* 1115, 1120, 1154, fr. 759, n. 205) also have chthonic aspects.

CHTHONIC ZEUS

Chthonic Zeus⁵ causes the thunder to reverberate at the death of Oedipus (*O.C.* 1606),⁶ and this god is concerned also with the rites of the dead (*Ant.* 450).⁷ Besides these two passages, there are a few other Sophoclean references to the chthonic nature of Zeus. As a benevolent god of the souls of the dead, he is invoked as a god with power to bring relief from pain (fr. 425). In this case, as in the *Oedipus Coloneus* (1606ff. and possibly 143), chthonic Zeus appears in a benevolent aspect.⁸

HERMES

The chthonic nature of Hermes is strongly marked. In Sophocles, Hermes of the underworld does not seem very closely identified with the Olympian god of the same name. As Maia's son, he is invoked with the other gods of Hades, to protect Orestes in his scheme of vengeance (*El.* 139ff., 1396). As herald of the dead, his office carries Hermes to the gods below the earth, as well as to men on earth. But no definite mention is made of the term *ψυχοπομπός*, an epithet

⁵ Chthonic Zeus is usually understood to signify the god Hades; cf. Preller I. 798, Jebb on *O.C.* 1606, Stoller in Roscher I.908. But Hewitt (*Harr. Stud.* XIX 74), comparing the reference in Hes. *Op.* 465 and the inscription to Z. chth. found at Myconos (Ditt. *Syll.* 615, 25ff.), suggests that in *O.C.* this Zeus is represented rather as a god of vegetation.

⁶ Cf. the reference to Z. *Bronton* in C.I.G. 3819, and the mention of chthonic thunder sent by Zeus in Aes. *P.V.* 993; Eur. *El.* 748, *Alc.* 905, fr. 477; Ar. *Av.* 1745ff., 1749ff. The scholiasts apparently found difficulty in interpreting these passages; cf. e.g. the three scholions on *Av.* 1745ff.

⁷ Besides these passages, where Zeus is distinctly represented as having chthonic functions, other phases of the god, mentioned in the chapter on Olympian Z., may be of similar nature. In ap. Rhod. 4.698ff., and Paus. 1.2.7, 3.17.9, and 7.25.1., Z. *hikesios* (*Ph.* 484) is represented as an irascible power of vengeance who must be placated, Z. *tropaios* (cf. *Ant.* 143, *Tr.* 303) is likewise classed with the chthonic gods by some scholars (cf. Rohde I.273 n 1. and Hewitt *Harr. Stud.* XIX 111f.). Dittenberger (on *C.I.G.* Sept. I. 548) and Drexler (in Roscher II. 2227) connect this god with the apparatus of war. Z. *alexetor* (cf. *O.C.* 143) and Z. *pausilupos* (cf. fr. 425), too, are declared to be chthonic in nature (cf. Hewitt *op. cit.* p. 87). Z. *soter* (cf. fr. 425) also is called chthonic by Ramsay (*J.H.S.*, III 1882, 124) and by Hewitt (*op. cit.* p. 88), who say that it was as an apotropaic being that this god received the third libation (cf. Hesych. s.v. Finally, the Zeus mentioned in *Ph.* 391 as the son of Rhea-Ge may also be chthonic (cf. Aes. *Supp.* 890ff. and Eur. fr. 472).

⁸ Cf. *Il.* 9.457, where Zeus *chthonios* is invoked, in conjunction with Persephone, as a soul deity; while in Hes., *Op.* 465, *Zeus chthonios*, as a benevolent vegetative deity, is associated with Demeter in the prayer of the farmer.

by which the Hermes of the dead is very often designated.^{9,10} Since it is he who leads the souls away (*O.C.* 1547f.), and sends up the shades (*El.* 110f.), the dead are placed under his care. This office of attending and guarding man and of conducting souls to Hades is given to him by Zeus.¹¹ Likewise the dying Ajax invokes Hermes to take his soul into his safe keeping and to conduct it to the world beyond (*Aj.* 831).¹² So too the Oedipus says: *μ'ἄγει / Ἔρμης ὁ πόμπος* (*ib.* 1548). Thus Hermes is associated with the goddess Persephone (*O.C.* 1347f.) and is identified with the sphere of dead (*El.* 110f.); his name, at least, is coordinated with that of the rulers of the underworld.

Further reference is made to his character as a divine messenger by the words: *Ἐρμης ὁ πέμπων . . . ἡγήσαιτο* (*Ph.* 133). Here and also in *El.* 1395 and *Tr.* 620, Hermes is the umpire of contests and the guide of the living on errands of danger or guile. In fr. 620 he is regarded as the divine patron of messengers.¹³

Hermes is, moreover, preëminently the god of trickery and is, therefore, frequently called 'wily' (*Ph.* 133, fr. 314; *El.* 1395). In the *Ichneutae* (fr. 314) he is the precocious thief of Apollo's cattle and the inventor of the lyre. In this play and also in *O.T.* 1105, the aspect of Hermes as the patron of flocks and herds is seen as he is referred to as a pastoral god associating with nymphs, like Apollo¹⁴ and Pan. Here (viz. *O.T.* 1105) Hermes is called 'the ruler of Cylene.' In the *Ichneutae* (fr. 314) this locality that had concealed him is represented in the personal form as the nymph Cylene who nursed him (cf. l. 266). Moreover this god is connected with the interpretation of an oracular speech, as we see in the prayer to him in fr. 573.¹⁵ A further point of contact between Hermes and Apollo

⁹ Cf. Eur. *Med.* 732, Diog. L. VIII, 31.

¹⁰ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 622, *Pers.* 629; Eur. *Rhes.* 216.

¹¹ In his character as conductor of sleep and of dreams (cf. Athen. I. 13 and Plut. *Symp.* VI. 9) Hermes was naturally connected with death and the underworld. Possibly it is Hermes who is invoked as the giver of eternal sleep (*O.C.* 1578); cf. Iwanowitzsch *op. cit.* 99ff.

¹² Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 90. Likewise 'leader of the dead' (*nekron prompos*) is the designation of Hermes in tr. fr. adesp. 19 (forte Soph.)

¹³ Throughout Greek literature Hermes is represented as the chief messenger of Zeus; cf. e.g. Pind. *O.* VI. 82, Aes. *P.V.* 969.

¹⁴ Cf. chapter on Apollo.

¹⁵ Cramer, *Anecdot.* Par. IV. 60, 21. Pearson refers us to O. Seeck Unterg. *d. antiken* II 573, for points of contact in the worship of Hermes and Apollo.

is the reference to their connection with the death of Argus. The epithet ἀργειφόντης is applied to each of these gods in Sophocles (fr. 1024).

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE

The goddesses Demeter and Persephone are often named together (e.g. *O.C.* 681).¹⁶ The fact that they are joined by a close bond and that they are both deserving of great reverence is indicated by their cult-titles πότνιαι (*ib.* 1050) and μεγάλαι (*ib.* 683).¹⁷ In a schol. on the latter passage, as well as in fr. 451, we find mention of a special connection between the crocus and the cult of Demeter.¹⁸

One of her cult-names as an agricultural deity, mentioned in a prayer in fr. 826,¹⁹ is ἀνησυδώρα Ἀναξιδώρα a parallel form of this epithet is applied to her in fr. 1010.²⁰ As a goddess of agriculture, Demeter has natural affinity with Dionysus²¹ (*ib.* 1010), and she is sometimes identified with the Magna Mater or Ge²² (frs. 826, 290). The epithets ἀγησία²³ (fr. 981), φερέσβιος (fr. 687) and εὐχλοος (*O.C.* 1600) are applied to Demeter as a goddess of grain and other fruits of the earth. She is regarded as the guardian of young green corn and other growing things,—giving them life (fr. 687), and strength

¹⁶ Cf. Ar. *Phoen.* 683, where Demeter and Persephone are called ‘the goddesses with two names.’

¹⁷ Cf. Paus. VIII. 29.1, 32.2; Toepfer, *Att. Geneal.* 219; Preller Rob. 749.4., O. Kern in Pauly-Wissowa IV. 2745ff. *Megale* was the special title in the popular religion, especially at Smyrna; cf. Drexler ap. Roschor II. 2281; Cockhel, *Doctrina Numorum veterum* II. 5431f.; B. Mueller, *Megas Theos* (diss. Halens) XXI. 281ff. For the identification of Demeter with the goddess Ge (fr. 290, 827) cf. chap. on Ge.

¹⁸ There is little literary evidence of this connection, though baskets of flowers of various kinds are often represented among Demeter’s attributes. Persephone, indeed, is said to have been gathering crocuses when she was carried away by Hades (*Hom. h. Dem.* 6). Schneidewin (n. ad hoc loc.) comments on the saffron-colored robes worn by women at the Thesmophoriazuae, a festival of Demeter. But, as Pearson remarks (n. ad. hoc. loc.), saffron seems to be a general characteristic of self-dedication to deities. (*Ae. Lys.* 645 et schol.).

¹⁹ Demeter was worshipped under this title at Phyle; cf. Paus. I.31.4.

²⁰ Cf. Phot. 1177, Hesych. I.178.

²¹ Generally, however, the attributes of Demeter (*xera trophe*) and those of Dionysus (*hygra trophe*) are kept distinct.

²² Cf. Ap. Rhod. I. 1117.

²³ This is probably a corrupt form of *auxesia* cf. Phot. 38.14 Hesych. I.51, Zenob. 4.20. The name may have been applied to Demeter on account of the scorching power of the summer heat (Sic Heysch. *Loc. cit.*, cf. Usener, Gotternamen 243; Cook, *C.R.* XVII 178.).

(fr. 981), and freshness (*O.C.* 1600).²⁴ In this capacity Ceres had a shrine at Sophocles' native place, Colonus, and also in the nearby city, on the slope of the Areopagus. So we may reasonably suppose that the dramatist intentionally refers to these shrines here (*ib.* 1600f.), and that an Athenian audience would appreciate such a reference.²⁵

Both Demeter and Persephone are the spiritual supporters of their faithful votaries; they cherish the sacred mysteries for mortals (*ib.* 1050). Their temple at Eleusis, "the house that received the initiated,"²⁶ was the scene of the chief mysteries and was therefore held in the highest reverence. In view of the special blessings conferred by them upon the initiated after death, Demeter, as well as Persephone, was worshipped as a soul deity. Probably these Eleusinian goddesses are the ones referred to by the words *χθόνιοι θεαί* in *O.C.* 683. Yet it is a noteworthy that in Sophocles or elsewhere in tragedy, Demeter does not receive the epithet *ψυχοπόμπος*. '*Ελευσίνια* is her title in *Ant.* 1120.

Her daughter, the *άφανής θεός* (*O.C.* 1506), as consort of the ruling deity, distinctly belongs to the realm of Hades (*El.* 110).²⁷ There Persephone greets the souls of the dead (*Ant.* 894) and, together with Hermes, leads them to their destination (*O.C.* 1548).²⁸

DIONYSUS

Dionysus, another deity prominent in the Sophoclean plays, holds a very important place in the chthonic, as well as in the Olympian, circle of gods. The introduction of this new cult among the Greeks was the most momentous change in ancient Greek polytheism. For into the erstwhile somber worship of the chthonic powers,—a worship that undoubtedly had tremendous influence upon the daily life of the people—was then brought a religion of brightness and joy and even of ecstasy. For Dionysus brought not only merriment and good fellowship with his gift of the vine, but also the spiritual exaltation that comes from religious fervor.

²⁴ In the lost play *Triptolemus* Sophocles represented Demeter as goddess of distribution of corn for sowing; cf. fr. 981, Dion. Hal. I. 12.2, Xen. *Hel.* VI. 3. 6, Diod. V. 4. and V. 68.

²⁵ At Athens; cf. Paus. I.22.3.

²⁶ Cf. Ar. *Ves.* 303.

²⁷ An unusual title of Persephone, suggested, possibly, by the literal meaning of the name of her consort,—Hades, the 'unseen'; cf. Aes. *Sept.* 8 59.

²⁸ Cf. Farnell, *Y.W.C.S.*, 1909, p. 63.

As a god of the earth, whence came the vines, Dionysus was closely connected with woodland life, with flocks, herds, and fields, and of fertility in general. Thus his name is often associated with the woodland nymphs (*Ant.* 154, 1115; *O.T.* 1105, *O.C.* 679, fr. 171). In fr. 255 mention is made of the miraculous growth of a vine that attests the presence of Dionysus. This wondrous vine is said to put forth leaves and to bear fruit on the same day.²⁹

In *Ant.* 1147ff. reference is made to his connection, as a 'fiery chorus-leader of the fluttering stars,' with the Eleusinian mysteries³⁰ (cf. also *Ant.* 1120). Certain forms of the legend of Demeter's search for her daughter involved Dionysus and attached an important rôle to him. This aspect of Dionysiac worship is referred to in *O.C.* 1051f., where the poet mentions the vow of secrecy imposed upon the initiated as the 'gold seal set by the celebrant Eumolpidae'.³¹ The connection of Dionysus with the Eleusinian cult is clearly and decisively shown in fr. 959, where he is called Iacchus and thus is expressly identified with the mystery god.³² As Iacchus, his connection with the cult of Demeter is referred to in several passages (cf. *O.C.* 1010, fr. 596, *Ant.* 1115, 1154). The thrice-repeated mention of this god with the night (*ib.* 1146, 1148, 1151) marks his connection with the moon also. This is one of the few significant references in Greek literature of the classical period to the character of Dionysus as a moon-god.³³

Thebes, called the birthplace of the god, was the mother city of Dionysiaca worship in Europe (*ib.* 1122, *O.T.* 210, *Tr.* 510). From

²⁹ The *Bacchae* of Euripides is a great storehouse of references to such miracles wrought by power of Dionysus.

³⁰ According to Foucart (*Les Mysteres d'Eleusis*, Paris, 1914) Dionysus of the mysteries is an Attic form of Osyrus, and is distinct from the Theban-Thracian god of the same name.

³¹ For the Thracian origin of Dionysiaca worship is indicated by the word Eumolpidae, cf. Toepfier, *Attische Genealog.* p. 40, and Harrison *Proleg.* p. 554.

³² Authorities on Gk. religion do not invariably classify Dionysus a distinctly chthonic god. The classification here given is not a hard and fast one. Dionysus was but a late comer into the Olympian circle.

³³ This is, according to Pearson, the only reference that explicitly marks such an identification. But there is, as he points out, some other reference that points in this direction: Paus. 2.23.3; Pol. 4.86; Athen. 476a.; *Etym. M.* s.v., Hofer in Roscher 11.4, and Gruppe 1435. A recently discovered Delphic paen (cf. *Bull. Corr. Hellen.* 1895, p. 403) seems in several places like an echo of this Sophoclean ode. Harrison's attempt (*Proleg.* 544) to minimize the significance of *boukeros* as an epithet of Iacchus is not very convincing. For the worship of Dionysus in bull-form cf. Frazer-Paus VII. 16.31 and 288.

Thrace or Asia Minor this worship was brought to Thebes, and thence propagated to Delphi, where it was associated with the worship of Apollo (*Ant.* 1129ff., fr. 314). As a local patron of Thebes (cf. *O.T.* 210 and *Ant.* 154, 1115, 1119), he is invoked by the chorus of Theban elders to aid them in misfortune (*O.T.* 210ff.). In the hyporcheme near the end of the *Antigone* (1147ff.) he is likewise invoked as a healer by the Thebans. Italy, too, is mentioned as a region especially under the influence and protection of this god (*ib.* 1117). ‘Ivy-mantled,’ ‘world-famous’ Nysa is also represented as a locality³⁴ filled with the divine presence of Dionysus (*Ant.* 1131.). It is a place ‘resounding with the song of birds,’ which the god counts as his dear motherland (fr. 959). In this passage, as also in *O.T.* 1105 and *Ant.* 1126ff., the worship of Dionysus is connected with mountain tops.³⁵ This god is mentioned also as a patron of the region about Colonus (*O.C.* 679).

In frs. 659 and 968 he is called³⁶ ‘bull-devouring’ (*ταυροφάγος*). It is possible that this epithet may refer to Dionysus, not as much as the recipient of a regular and formal sacrifice,³⁷ but as sharing the orgies of his worshippers, in whose persons he becomes incarnate when they seek to establish a divine communion by devouring the raw flesh³⁸ of the sacred animal.³⁹ Dionysus himself is said to

³⁴ This place baffles all attempts at exact localization; we might say with Sandys (ed. Eur. *Bacch.* 1892, 1.556), that Nysa was “a mountain which attended Dionysus on his travels.” It is never represented as easy of access to the human followers of Bacchus, but is referred to as a remote, mysterious place, a fairy-land where the nymphs (cf. *O.C.* 679) had fostered the infant deity. Cf. notes of Jebb and Pearson on fr. 959; also O. Kern in Pauly-Wiss. V 1035, and Davis, *The Asiatic Dion.* p. 153. Woodhouse in Hastings IX. 427 calls the sacred name of Nysa an integral element in the Dionysiaca mythology and religion. The connection of Dionysiaca worship mountain tops is very frequently referred to; in the *Bacchae*, e.g. the cry of the god’s followers is repeatedly ‘To the mountains.’ The god is also specially connected with Mt. Parnassus (Eur. *Ion.* 716).

³⁵ Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* e.g. 100.

³⁶ At Cynæta in Arcadia a bull was annually selected from the herd and carried to the sanctuary of Dionysus for sacrifice (Paus. 8.19.2). cf. also Ael. *Hist. Anc.* 12.34, Athen. 456. D, and C.I.A. I. 157. The bull-title *Bromios* is not applied to Dionysus in Sophocles.

³⁷ Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 103, 737ff.; fr. 472, Gruppe 732, Robertson-Smith (*Encyc. Brit.* XXI. 137), Frazer 11.165, Har. *Proleg.* 482f.

³⁸ Cf. Schol. 5 and Ar. *Ran.* 357, and Preller 432.

³⁹ If this view be correct, then Photius (*Lex.* p. 571) is justified in adding to this word the explanation *omeston*, which other evidence also ascribes to Dionysus.

have horns like a bull (fr. 959). But his familiar epithet *βρόνιος* is not found in Sophocles.

Another epithet applied to this god is *οἰνῶπα* (*O.T.* 210), a title suggesting the Asiatic conception of Dionysus. The words *παῖ Δῖον γένεθλον* (*Ant.* 1149) and *Διὸς βαρυβρεμέτα / γένος* (*ib.* 1116), declare his divine origin. His power over the Bacchantes is expressed by the epithets *τὸν τάμιον "Ιακχον"* (*ib.* 1154) and *χρυσομίτραν* (*O.T.* 209) and *Μαινάδων ὀμόσολον* (*ib.* 212). Bacchus, a very familiar name of the god, appears in various forms in Sophocles: *βάκχος* (*O.T.* 211), *βακχεῖος* (*ib.* 1105), *βακχᾶς* (fr. 598), *βάκχιος* (*Ant.* 154), *βακχεύς* (*ib.* 1122), *βακχώτας* (*O.C.* 678).

In *Ant.* 1115, the god is appropriately styled ‘many-named’ (*πολυνόνυμος*), referring to the various local rituals in his honor. The poets applied this epithet to most of the major Greek divinities; but it is especially applicable to Dionysus, because of the complex mingling of his cult with that of other gods.⁴⁰ He is referred to as a Delphic god (*ib.* 1126ff.)⁴² and is associated with Apollo (fr. 314). Zeus (*Ant.* 1116, 1149), Demeter (fr. 959, *Ant.* 1115ff., 1146ff.), the muses (*Ant.* 965),⁴³ the nymphs (*O.C.* 679; *Ant.* 154, 1115; *O.T.* 1105, fr. 171).

Furthermore, Dionysus is called the ‘master of the voices of the night’ (*O.T.* 1115f.), and, as the god of revelry⁴⁴ (*O.C.* 174, 678), he is described as ‘blazing with the torch’ (*O.T.* 213). This giver of wine (*O.C.* 174, *O.T.* 210), and other good gifts (cf. *Ant.* 1117), is addressed with the title ‘ruddy-faced’⁴⁵ (*ib.* 211, cf. *O.C.* 674).

⁴⁰ This epithet of Dionysus-Iacchus is mysterious. Cf. Farnell *G.C.* III. 149. Bruchmann, (*Epithet. Deor.* p. 92) refers us to Menand. fr. 289 and to Phot. s.v.

⁴¹ Cf. Usener, *G.N.* p. 334, n. 7. Preller enumerates about sixty titles applied to Dionysus.

⁴² Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 22ff.; Eur. *Phoen.* 226ff. *Bacch.* 306, 556ff., *I.T.* 1234, *Ion* 550, 714. The Delphic priesthood and the Apolline oracle were champions of the Dionysiac cult; cf. Farnell in Hastings VI. 10. 402. For the conjunction of Dionysus with Apollo cf. R. Harris *The ascent of Olympus* (Manchester Univ. Press, 1917).

⁴³ Cf. Rohde II. 81 and Hiller v Gaertringer, *De Graecorum fabulis ad Thracian pert. Quaest. crit.* (Berl. diss., 1886).

⁴⁴ There was great revelry and elaborate celebration in honor of this god during the Dionysia. This festival, the most attractive of all the splendid Attic festivals, was held early in the Spring, in the month Elaphebolion,—about the time of the equinox. It was during this time that the great Gk. tragedies were produced, in the Dionysiac theatre at Athens, in the presence of the chief priest of Dionysus.

⁴⁵ Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 236.

The vine and ivy are especially sacred to him (*O.C.* 174ff. *Ant.* 154, 1132; *Tr.* 219, 510, 704; *O.T.* 1105; fr. 255).

In *Ant.* 955ff. the poet refers to the punishment⁴⁶ of Lycurgus, son of Dryas, for the derision of Dionysus.⁴⁷ The Thracian king is here said to have met his doom for opposing the god and his followers. These followers are variously designated; Sophocles calls them *βάκχάντες* (fr. 674), *βάκχαι* (*Ant.* 1121), *βάκχιοι* (*ib.* 154), *Μαινάδες* (*O.T.* 212), *θυῖαι* (*Ant.* 1152), and *κυρβάντες*,—a title that really belongs to the attendants of Rhea Cybele (fr. 862). Finally, we must mention fr. 591, where the chorus affirms the freedom and equality of all men, a principle that belonged to the genial spirit of the Dionysiac cult.

THANATOS

Thanatos, another⁴⁸ deity of the underworld, is termed *Γάς παῖς καὶ Ταρτάρου* (*O.C.* 1574). Though not elsewhere addressed in this way, it is apparently Thanatos that is the god referred to in this passage; for it is this god who is called *αἰένυπνον* (*ib.* 1220). He is regarded as *ἐπίκουρος ἵστοτέλεστος* (*ib.* 1220) and as *ἱατρός* (fr. 1209),—‘a healer who cures⁴⁹ all our woes at the last’ (fr. 698). Thus, as a welcome benefactor, he is invoked by Philoctetes (*Ph.* 777f.), Oedipus (*O.C.* 1220), and Ajax (*Aj.* 854).⁵⁰ But it is said that Thanatos made the poison that causes the death of Heracles (*Tr.* 834). This, however, is only the poetical expression of an idea which we have met before, that the chthonic powers inflict woe upon mortals (cf. *Aj.* 1007).

HADES

The lord of the underworld appears in Sophocles under various names, but most commonly (*Ant.* 519, 542, 575, 777, 810; *Aj.* 1035; *El.* 542, 949; *Tr.* 501, 1040, 1098), as ‘Αἰδης. ‘Αἰδης is the form used in lyrics (*O.C.* 1690, *Tr.* 1095). Pluto⁵¹ (*Πλούτων*) is a euphemistic appellative of Hades (fr. 273). The notation in *Ant.* 1200 seems to

⁴⁶ Cf. Aes. fr. 59; Eur. *Bacch.* 451ff. It is a commonplace that a god hates those who neglect his worship; cf. e.g. Eur. *Bacch.* 432f.

⁴⁷ On the ritual myth about the opposition to the orgiastic worship of Dionysus in Thrace, cf. Lobeck II. 1042, Rohde II. 73, Farnell V. 85-118.

⁴⁸ Thanatos may of course be merely one aspect of chthonic Zeus or of Hades.

⁴⁹ So, too, in Ar. *Alc.* 25 Thanatos is called a physician (*hiereus*).

⁵⁰ In Ar. *Hipp.* 1373 Thanatos is likewise invoked by the dying.

⁵¹ *Pluton* is just a byform of *Plutos*; cf. Usener p. 16.

be the earliest evidence of this application of the word.⁵² Possibly this name may be ironically applied to Hades, as the god who is, in truth, the lord of only unsubstantial shadows;⁵³ cf. *O.T.*⁵⁴ 29. In this character, Pluto is to be regarded as an attendant minister of Zeus, rather than as Zeus himself.⁵⁵ The cult of Pluto, the god of wealth, was particularly associated with that of Demeter at Eleusis.⁵⁶

Under the by-name *Aἰδωνός* (merely a strengthened form of the name Hades), this god is asked to bestow a happy death upon Oedipus (*O.C.* 1556). Hades and the other chthonic gods are sometimes represented as stern to human prayers;⁵⁷ so this propitiatory address to him and to Persephone is prefaced by the qualification *εἰ θέμις ἔστι*. It was customary for the dying to pray thus to the nether gods, especially Hades, (cf. e.g. *Tr.* 104, 1085; *Ant.* 777, *Aj.* 831ff.). As the brother of Zeus, he is invoked by Heracles, son of Zeus, to grant him quick release from pain by death (*Tr.* 1040f., 1085). Hades is here regarded as a ‘sweet’⁵⁸ deliverer (*ib.* 1040). Often, however, this god inspires only fear in mortals; they shrink from him,—*τὸν ἀπότροπον*,—in horror (*Aj.* 607, cf. fr. 298). He is destructive and ever demanding fresh victims (cf. *El.* 541, *Ant.* 1284).

Hades is also called *ὁ κατώ θεός* (*Aj.* 571), *ἄναξ* (*Tr.* 1085), *'Αχέρων* (*El.* 816), *ὁ παρὰ τὸν Ἀχέροντα θεός ἀνάσσων* (*ib.* 184), *ὅπαγκοίτας*⁵⁹ (*Ant.* 808; cf. *El.* 138, *O.C.* 563, *Ant.* 804, fr. 597), and *δυσκάθαρτος* (*Ant.* 1284). He is continually associated with night and darkness (e.g. *Aj.* 660, *O.C.* 1559). Among his other epithets are: *ἔννυχος* (*Tr.* 501), *ἔσπερος* (*O.T.* 177), *αἰδηλος*⁶⁰ (*Aj.* 607), *ἔννυχιων ἄν α*

⁵² Cf. Pearson on fr. 273.

⁵³ Cf. *Plat. Crot.* 403 a.

⁵⁴ This byname did not survive as an independent personification; but consciousness of the real significance of the epithet remained, possibly with a view to the wealth stored beneath the earth (cf. *Plat. loc. cit.*, *Luc. Tim.* 21).

⁵⁵ Cf. Suidas s.v. *Zeus ktesios*.

⁵⁶ Cf. Farnell, *Gk. Cults.* III 137 and 281.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. *Aes. Sept.* 915, *Eur. I.T.* 185.

⁵⁸ The appellation *glukus* is not merely propitiatory here; Hereacles, tormented by intolerable pain, is begging Death to come to his release.

⁵⁹ This word is here retained as the correct reading in spite of the fact that it appears in the preceding sentence. Jebb argues that its appearance in l. 805 is no safe argument for spuriousness here, as similar repetitions are frequent in Sophocles, and that this term is here a more expressive epithet, when we consider the bright youth of the victim.

⁶⁰ The etymology of the word Hades was forgotten so completely in the personification that the tautology of this epithet was not felt; Cf. *Il.* 2. 723.

(*ib.* 1559), *μέγας* (*O.T.* 29), *ἄναξ* (*El.* 24, *Tr.* 1085), *φόνιος* (*O.C.* 1690), *δημιουργὸς ἄγριος* (*Aj.* 1035). The large number of epithets applied to this deity may be accounted for by the superstitious wish to avoid direct mention of him by name.

Matters concerning the vengeance of the dead are special occasions for the invocation of Hades (cf. *Ant.* 542, 1200). Thus he is asked to withhold wrath regarding the unburied corpse of Polyneices (*ib.* 1199f.). This god likewise is the one to whom Electra appeals for vengeance (*El.* 110). As lord of the underworld (*ib.* 184), he avenges murder (*ib.* 453ff.) and upholds the rights of the dead (*Ant.* 451, 1015ff., 1068ff.). Because of the course of action she pursues, Antigone is charged with worshipping only Hades, the god of the dead. In this passage the impiety of Creon is especially marked; he ironically suggests that Hades may save his devotee or else she will learn, though late, that it is labor lost to reverence *τὸν "Αἰδηνὸν"* (*ib.* 779f.).

Hades is referred to in a decidedly personal way, likewise, in *El.* 541, 949, *Ant.* 308, and 811. As the true god of the underworld, he receives the dead (*Tr.* 1085), and is the treasurer of souls (*Aj.* 658ff.). He is represented as supreme in his realm (*El.* 184, *O.C.* 1559f.).

As we have noted above,⁶¹ all objects of a lugubrious or deadly character are, in the poets, commonly ascribed to chthonic influence. Thus Hades is said to be the 'grim artificer' of the sword that brought death to Hector (*Aj.* 1027) and to Ajax (*ib.* 1035). In like manner Antigone's death place is called the 'bridal chamber of Hades' (*Ant.* 1205). The local sense of Hades, arising from the personal sense, is often seen (e.g. *Ant.* 635, 1241, 1284; *Tr.* 282, 501, 1161; *O.T.* 972; *El.* 137; *O.C.* 1552, 1561; frs. 832, 861). Furthermore, the word Hades is very frequently used as a synonym for death (e.g. *Ant.* 361, 579; fr. 298).

HECATE

Hecate, representing one side of Artemis (fr. 490)⁶² should be reckoned in the class of nether gods who are distinctly gods of souls.⁶³ In the prayer to her that wrath about the unburied body

⁶¹ Cf. p. 71.

⁶² Cf. Aes. *Supp.* 678; Eur. *Tro.* 323; Wilam. *Herm.* XXI. 609; Kern *ib.* XXIV. 500; Preller-Rob. I. 321; Wernicke in Pauly-Wiss. II. 1356; Farnell, *Gk. Cults* II. 509ff.

⁶³ Cf. Fairbanks *A.J.P.* 244.

be restrained (*Ant.* 199), there is a possible suggestion of a function similar to that of Hermes, conductor of souls.⁶⁴ If so, then the reference in *O.C.* 1548 ('the nether goddess') would be to Hecate,⁶⁵ and not to Persephone.

As a road-goddess, too, she is generally associated with chthonic worship. In this capacity she received the title *ἐρωδία* (fr. 535 and *Ant.* 1199) and altars were set up to her at wayside shrines⁶⁶ (fr. 535). In a lost play (cf. 490) Sophocles evidently gave an incantation in which Medea, the sorceress invoked Helios and Hecate.⁶⁷ Creon invokes this goddess along with Hades (*O.T.* 30), because she represented the underworld on earth. Moreover the *ἀνταῖος θεός* mentioned in fr. 335 is probably Hecate, as she is given this epithet elsewhere.⁶⁸ As a moon-goddess she appears likewise with chthonic powers (*ib.* l. 4). In both these capacities she wields the torch, an instrument of her sacred functions that is referred to rather vaguely here as the sacred fire. Hecate is represented in this passage as 'crowned with oak-leaves and garlands of cruel serpents' (*ib.* l. 5).

THE ERINYES

The Erinyes, ministers of the nether gods who avenge their wrongs (cf. *Ant.* 1074f.),⁶⁹ are primarily conceived of as local ancestral ghosts, particularly the souls of those seeking vengeance.⁷⁰ In a general sense, these goddesses are called into existence by the resolve of the gods to punish guilt, especially that of murder (*El.* 112).⁷¹

These deities are conceived of in a somewhat different way in Sophocles than in Aeschylus.⁷² Punishment of matricide⁷³ is not

⁶⁴ As a road-goddess, Hecate, like Hermes, is sometimes called a messenger. In this capacity there appears a connection between Hecate and the Harpies, snatchers of souls.

⁶⁵ Cf. Eur. *Ion*. 241.

⁶⁶ Cf. Theoc. II. 36. et schol. As a goddess of souls, Hecate was often associated with stormy winds; cf. II. 15. 150; Rohde I. 72, II. 83 and 264.

⁶⁷ Cf. Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 3.1214, Theoc. *loc. cit.*

⁶⁸ Cf. Aes. fr. 223.

⁶⁹ Here only one fury is mentioned, as also in *Ant.* 603; *Aj.* 1034, 1390; *Tr.* 808, 895; *El.* 276, 491, 1081; *O.C.* 1299, fr. 508.

⁷⁰ In Aeschylus, e.g., we see this early conception of the Erinyes quite clearly: "Oedipus, holy shade, black Eriny, mighty art thou!" (*Sept.* 988).

⁷¹ The Eumenides are the special avengers of the murdered; rather than the defenders of all right in general: cf. Rohde, *Psyche* 247 and *Rh. Mns.* (1895) p. 22; Dieterich, *Nekura*, p. 55, Crusius in Roscher's *Lex.* II. 1163.

⁷² Hookes (*De Soph.* *O.C.* 62ff.) maintains that only in *Aj.* 835ff. and in fr. 508 are the Sophoclean furies like those of Aeschylus.

⁷³ Cf. chap. on Apollo.

emphasized here: the mission of the Erinyes in the younger poet's plays seem to be that of avenging wrong in general. Electra invokes them to come to her aid in avenging her father (*El.* 110ff., 1080, etc.).⁷⁴ As Clytemnestra has murdered her husband⁷⁵ and is consorting with her accomplice in the crime, she especially fears them (*ib.* 275f.). The chorus expresses confidence that the Erinyes will come to avenge Agamemnon (*ib.* 489f.). Soon thereafter Orestes and his friends come as the avowed agents of the Erinyes,—the unavoidable dogs of vengeance (*ib.* 1388). Sophocles' attitude towards the murder of Clytemnestra is quite different from that of Aeschylus and Euripides in the treatment of this story. Both the latter dramatists, though their point of view is not the same, regard her murder as an unnatural crime: but Sophocles treats it as quite a praiseworthy deed. Aeschylus presents the matter as a conflict of claims between Apollo and the Erinyes: while Orestes, beset by opposing emotions, is a mere tool in their hands.

Euripides represents these gods as mythological representatives of stings of remorse.⁷⁶ This is a subjective, rationalistic interpretation. In Sophocles, on the other hand, these powers of vengeance are not inner monitors, but external agencies of retribution.⁷⁷ Euripides criticizes Apollo, while he makes the Erinyes appear as the workings of the conscience of Orestes, who in his heart doubts Apollo. But in the drama of Sophocles the matricide is regarded as the natural and inevitable result of the crime perpetrated upon Agamemnon (cf. *El.* 11, 37, and 70). Apollo is, therefore, justified and no counter-claim of the Erinyes because of the murder of Clytemnestra is admitted by the chorus (*ib.* 1508ff.): though Aegisthus' foreboding words declare that the final consummation of the family curse has not yet appeared (*ib.* 1497f.). So far is Sophocles from representing

⁷⁴ As it was not the part of the Erinyes to punish adultery, Porson and others rejected l. 114. These deities, however, might be expected to be more wrathful about adulterous murder than about an ordinary one.

⁷⁵ Case (*C.R.* XVI 199) is not of this opinion. Electra's words to her mother (*El.* 275f.) as well as Clytemnestra's attitude in l. 793, seems to support his view. But the general impression one gets from the Sophoclean version of this story is what we have stated above,—viz. that Clytemnestra does not fear these gods of vengeance.

⁷⁶ Cf. Eur. *Or.* 397.

⁷⁷ Harrison (*loc. cit.* XIX. 205ff.), points out that this conception of the Erinyes as detached, external ministers of vengeance was a comparatively late development in Greek religion, belonging more to literature than to popular fate.

the younger god as in conflict with the elder deities of vengeance, that he actually represents the Erinyes as the attendants of Apollo (*O.T.* 469).⁷⁸

Elsewhere, however, Sophocles gives the Erinyes the same doubtful shifting character as they have in the other dramatists. We find that they are variously represented as avenging spirits of crime in general (*Aj.* 837, 843, 1034, 1390; *Tr.* 1051; *Ant.* 603), or as particularly concerned in the punishment of sins against kin (cf. *Ant.* 1075; *Tr.* 817, *O.C.* 1391, 1433f.). The Erinyes are invoked also as special avengers of outrage on the dead (cf. *Ant.* 1074ff., *Aj.* 835ff., *O.T.* 471f., *Tr.* 808f.). They see 'all that men suffer at the hands of men' (*Aj.* 836), crimes of murder (*El.* 113), and of adultery (*ib.* 114).⁷⁹ From one point of view these gods are malevolent deities. But Oedipus addresses them as though they were in very truth 'kindly-disposed.'⁸⁰—Eumenides (*O.C.* 106). This euphemism may be only a form of placation, however.

These goddesses are looked upon with great reverence and awe, as we see from the attitude of the natives of Colonus to them: their grove is inviolable (*ib.* 39f.), their name is spoken with hesitation and fear (*ib.* 41f., 84, 127), they are approached with averted eyes (*ib.* 128), and addressed with audible prayer (*ib.* 489).

An unusually large number of epithets are applied to the Erinyes. When Oedipus seeks the local name with which to address them at Colonus (*ib.* 41), he is told that the proper title here is Eumenides 'but other names please otherwhere' (*ib.* 41). In the last speech of Ajax (*Aj.* 835ff.), they are addressed by many titles: ἀρωγοί, ἀεὶ πάρθεναι, ταχέιαι, ἀεὶ δρῶσαι πάντα, τανύποδες, σέμναι. Σέμναι⁸¹ is an

⁷⁸ Harrison regards this as a 'mythological inversion'" In Sophocles Apollo is the minister of vengeance, not of reconciliation. The Erinyes, the ancient avengers of murder are made subservient to him" (*J.H.S.* XIX. 246).

⁷⁹ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 1580.

⁸⁰ The charities (fr. 545) are practically only the beneficent side of the Erinyes, as Harrison points out (*loc. cit.* p. 209).

⁸¹ Cambell remarks "this epithet 'welcome' is not merely propitiatory, like Eumenides, etc., but it here expresses the real feeling of Oed. He has no fear of the Erinyes, who have 'done their worst,' and now are to give him the rest for which he longs." Jebb emphasizes the fact that this word is said with blandishment, and he remarks "No poet of the classical age, I think, ventures on this use of *glukus* in addressing deities" (cf. *Tr.* 1040).

epithet especially appropriate to them as deities connected with the souls of the dead (*O.C.* 89, 458; *Aj.* 837; *El.* 112).⁸²

Sophocles nowhere describes the lineaments⁸³ of the Erinyes in detail: but the vague picture he gives of their visages (cf. e.g. their epithet *δεινώπες*, *O.C.* 84) leaves us with an impression none the less awful than what we get from the vivid description in Aeschylus. Speed and wide range of power are special characteristics of these deities: *ταχεῖαι* (*Aj.* 843), *τανύποδες* (*ib.* 837), *πολύποδες* (*El.* 489), *πολύχειρες* (*ib.* 489), *ἄφυκτοι κύνες* (*ib.* 1388), *όρωσαι πάγτα* (*Aj.* 836, *O.C.* 42, cf. *El.* 112). The epithet *πότνιαι* (*O.C.* 84) undoubtedly belongs, as a cult name, to the Erinyes as much as it does to the Eleusinian goddesses (cf. e.g. *O.C.* 1050). We find the following epithets also applied to the Erinyes: *ἄσινοι* (*ib.* 100), *ἀμαιμάκεται* (*ib.* 127), *δήμουχοι* (*ib.* 458), *θεαί* (cf. 40, 90, 1568), *ἔκφοβοι* (*ib.* 39), *κόραι* (*ib.* 40, 127), *χθόνιοι* (*ib.* 1568), *λωβήτερες* (*Ant.* 1074), *ὑστερόφθοροι* (*ib.* 1074), *μνήμονες* (*Aj.* 1390).

Mythologically, they are said to be the daughters of the gods,—an expression that denotes their divinity. In this passage the Erinyes are supplicated in conjunction with Hermes of the underworld and with Hades and Persephone.⁸⁴ Likewise in the words *Αἴδον καὶ θεῶν Ερίνυες* (*Ant.* 1075) the divine chthonic nature of the Erinyes is made clear. This is again, and more exactly, referred to in *O.C.* 40 and 106, where they are invoked as the children of Earth and Darkness.⁸⁵ Again, in ll. 40, 90, 1568, they are distinctly classed as chthonic goddesses.⁸⁶ In l. 1391 the Erinyes are invoked separately from the personal Arai of 1375. Likewise, in *El.* 111, these forces are regarded as separate, though they are sometimes identified (e.g. *O.T.* 417).

In *El.* 1081 the word Erinyis is used in a general way of a personified destructive agency. So, too, in *Ant.* 603f., *Tr.* 895, *El.* 276, this word, or a substitute, is used to designate merely calamity or

⁸² As *Semnai*, the Erinyes were given particular honor at Athens: cf. *Thuc.* 1. 126, *Diog. Laert.* 1. 112, *Paus* 1. 28, 6. *C.I.A.* 2. 57, *Farnell V.* 440.

⁸³ Cf. *Aes. Eum.* 83, 367, 995; *Eur. El.* 1270, *Or.* 402.

⁸⁴ We can not imagine a more horrible conception of the Erinyes than the vivid one given in *Aes. Eum.* 46ff.

⁸⁵ C. O. Müller (disc. on the *Eumenides*, second edition, 1852, p. 155) remarks: "The Eumenides are neither more nor less than a particular form of the great goddess who rule the earth and the lower world,—namely Demeter and Cora."

⁸⁶ So also in Aeschylus (*Eum.* 118) and in Eur. (*Androm.* 958, *El.* 1248, 1266; *I.T.* 919, *Or.* 251, 310).

punishment. Likewise the numen that is accused of having forged the fatal sword of Ajax (*Aj.* 1034f.) is poetically conceived of as a pernicious erinys. A similar application of the word appears in *Tr.* 893ff., where the unfortunate captive Iole is called the erinys that has befallen the home of Hercules (cf. *ib.* 1050). But these personifications are only vaguely related to those divine ministers of justice,—those venerable, kindly, powerful, terrible, angry gods of vengeance.

GE

Ge, the great vegetative goddess, is closely connected with chthonic soul deities. The dead are buried in the earth and therefore this earth goddess is associated with their spirits.⁸⁷ So great is her affinity to the gods of the underworld that she is sometimes called the wife of Tartarus (cf. *O.C.* 1574).

Ge is one form with many names.⁸⁸ If it be true that all the women goddesses of Greece are modified forms of this one primitive deity, then, not only Themis, Artemis, Tyche, Chryse, but also Demeter and Cora, Aphrodite, Hestia, Hera, and Athena are all only various aspects of Ge, Mother Earth.⁸⁹

Even the Eumenides appear as local⁹⁰ forms of the earth goddess. Indeed the main idea of the *Antigone* may be described⁹¹ as that of a conflict between the power of Ge, represented by Antigone's affection for her dead brother and her reverence for those rights of the dead which the Eumenides guard, and the power of Zeus,⁹² the representative of the civic authority vested in the ruler of Thebes. This elemental chthonic force is further correlated with Zeus⁹³ in *Ph.* 391, and appears identified with Dionysus in frs. 290 and 827. The number of references to this goddess in Greek drama is, indeed, quite remarkable, considering that her cult was never developed to any great extent at Athens.⁹⁴ The explanation of this prominence

⁸⁷ Cf. references to "Earth and the perished" in *Aes. Pers.* 220, 523, etc.

⁸⁸ Cf. *Aes. P.V.* 210.

⁸⁹ Cf. Gerhard, *Ueber Metroon in Goettermutter*, p. 103.

⁹⁰ Cf. *Pans.* 2. 11. 4, where the ritual at Sikyon is described.

⁹¹ Cf. Zielinski, *Festschr. f. th. Gompers.* 141ff.

⁹² Cf. *Aes. Sept.* 69, where Ge, the deified form of the elemental force of the earth, is correlated with Zeus, the air god.

⁹³ So Farnell III. 1ff. But Dieterich (*Mutter Erde*. p. 54) says that in Attica Ge was really more important than even Zeus.

⁹⁴ At least the word mother in this fragment seems to refer to Ge, just as the word father of l. 2 probably refers to Uranus.

of Ge in Athenian literature lies in the eternal appeal that Mother Earth has for all mankind.

Sophocles gives her the title 'Mother' in fr. 341 and fr. 591,⁹⁵ 'Mother of the gods' (fr. 290), 'Mother of all' (*O.C.* 1480), even of Zeus himself (*Ph.* 391). The highest place among the gods is ascribed to Ge in *Ant.* 338,—θεῶν τὰν ὑπερτάταν. But similar epithets are applied to Artemis⁹⁶ and to Helios (cf. e.g. *O.T.* 660). Such expressions, showing the temporary feelings of the chorus and other characters, mean no more than do such hyperboles as βροτῶν ἄριστος and the like.

Philoctetes offers two prayers of supplication to this goddess (*Ph.* 391ff., 819). In the first of these two passages (viz. 391ff.) Ge is addressed as the goddess of the hills (*δρεστέρα*) and all fostering (*παμβρῶτι*) and 'lady of the golden Pactolus': and, later, as *ταυροκτόνων λεόντων ἔφεδρε* (*ib.* 401). These epithets are of singular interest to a student of Greek religion. For the attributes given to the goddess belong to three groups, which represent her,—first in her primary character, then identify her with Rhea (cf. fr. 290), and finally portray her as the Phrygian Cybele.⁹⁷ All these aspects of Ge are completely fused in the unity of *μάτερ πότνια* (*l.* 395). The worship of the mother of gods, the Great Mother, was doubtless in some relation to the worship of Rhea-Cybele and to Ge, and Sophocles seems to recognize this conception (cf. also fr. 290 and *O.C.* 1480).⁹⁸ The scene of the *Philoctetes* is at Lemnos and this play was not produced till the last decade of the fifth century. Now, as the cult of Rhea-Cybele was introduced into Greece about this time,⁹⁹ such identification is not improbable here.

At times, even when this deity is not directly invoked, reference to the earth is made in so figurative a manner that the physical element almost disappears in the personal. Earth is called *μάκαιρα* (*Ph.* 393, 400), *ἰερά* (*ib.* 706), *πότνια* (*ib.* 391), *ἄφθιτος* (*Ant.* 339),

⁹⁵ Sophocles evidently has in mind the Magna Mater and likewise to Rhea-Cybele. cf. Dieterich *op. cit.* p. 41.

⁹⁶ Cf. Aes. *P.V.* 205, Eur. *I.A.* 1522.

⁹⁷ For a similiar fusion cf. Ar. *Av.* 873ff.

⁹⁸ That the Magna Mater was one of the many shapes of the earth goddess is amply attested by cults; e.g. cf. the worship at Erythrae (Farnell III 292). In Eur. *Hel.* 1302, Demeter is called the mother of the gods and is clearly identified with Cybele; while in Hes. *Th.* 453, Demeter is represented as the daughter of Rhea-Ge.

⁹⁹ Cf. reference to Rhea-Cybele in frs. 334 and 365.

ἀκάματος (*ib.* 339).¹⁰⁰ Earth is the *βιόδωρος* (*Ph.* 1161, *O.C.* 975, *O.T.* 1397ff.), the *τροφεύς* of mankind (*Ph.* 1161). Men were supposed to be both nourished and educated by their motherland (*El.* 67; *Ph.* 241, 391, 687, 1040). Even an adoptive motherland is supposed to be tenderly protective, as we see in the last great appeal of Ajax to Salamis (*Aj.* 859ff.) and in the farewell address of Philoctetes to Lemnos (*Ph.* 1452ff.).

ANCESTRAL PATRON DEITIES

Worship of the ancestral gods formed one of the oldest elements in ancient Greek religion, and such gods are referred to in Greek literature and inscriptions with great reverence and devotion. The dead members of the family were considered as closely connected, if not identical with the *πατρῶοι θεοί*. Sometimes these gods are invoked in solemn oaths (cf. *O.C.* 756, *Ant.* 839, *Ph.* 933, *El.* 411). In fr. 583-l. 8 there is reference to the regret felt by the brides at separation from their ancestral gods.¹⁰¹ When they are mentioned by Electra, Chrysothemis, avoiding direct allusion to Agamemnon, instinctively uses a more general term—*θεῶν . . . τῶν ἐγγενῶν*, the gods of the race (*El.* 428).

¹⁰⁰ This passage (viz. *Ant.* 339) shows a curious mixture of the popular personal religion and the materialistic idea of earth. The latter never entirely superseded the former in Greek literature: cf. Plut. 935B and Farnell III 7.

¹⁰¹ To an Athenian reference to one's ancestral gods suggested the right to participate in the worship of the phratries; cf. . . . Plat. *Euthyd.* 302BC.

IX. MINOR GODS, DEMI-GODS, AND HEROES

Turning now to the minor deities in Sophocles, we notice that the Greek feeling of nearness to nature,¹ of close association with the more or less personified forces of the world about them, is clearly reflected in a large number of passages. Some of these have a high ethical and religious tone. In the *Ajax* (ll. 668-677), for instance, the hero reflects on the fact that everything in nature is subject to fixed laws: the hardest and strongest forces of nature—the fierce storms, the black night, etc.,—all yield in turn to other forces. ‘Shall weak man alone, then, never learn moderation and submission to authority?’ This is undoubtedly one of the great religious passages in Sophocles and it imparts the major lesson of the *Ajax*, viz., a warning against overweening insolence. In the *Trachiniae* there is a like passage, connecting man with the great order of nature (ll. 126-131). The chorus here reflects upon the alternation of joy and sorrow in human life: ‘The son of Cronos, the all-powerful king, hath not appointed a painless lot for mortals; sorrow and joy come to all, as the Bear moves in his circling path.’ In the *Oedipus Tyrannus* there is a similar passage,—the famous appeal to Mt. Cithaeron, which Oedipus calls his nurse and foster-mother, and which seems to him to be his only solace in his desperate plight. *Oι θεοὶ ἐγχώριοι*, a more general term, refers to the patron deities of any particular locality (*Tr.* 181ff.). Immediately upon his return to Argos, Orestes prays to them (*El.* 67). And Heracles offers them the first fruits of his victory (*Tr.* 183). In the *Philoctetes*, likewise, there are numerous references that imply an intimate relation between the hero and the local forces around him, forces which have been his only companions for ten years. At ll. 936ff., when he has been deprived of his bow, in his desperate need, he addresses the forces of nature: ‘Oh creeks! oh promontories! oh dens of mountain beasts! oh sheer cliffs!—None else will hear me—I appeal to you . . . oh

¹ Sometimes the ‘pathetic fallacy’ of regarding inanimate objects as friendly or hostile towards men is dramatic and rhetorical, rather than religious (e.g. *Aj.* 420, 459, where the streams of the Scamander are regarded as disposed toward the Argives, but hostile towards their enemy).

cave! . . . oh Lemnian land! oh fires!' So, too, at 986, 1454ff., etc. at ll. 1465ff., he entreats sea-girt Lemnus² to speed him, her part-guest, on his course. Indeed, throughout this entire play, the feeling for nature and the appeal to her for sympathy is very strong.

Great sanctity and religious power was associated with the waters of Greece.³ Rivers, or rather the river-gods, are among the minor deities mentioned in the *Philoctetes* and other plays of Sophocles. The broad-flowing Spercheius (*Ph.* 492), neighboring to the haunts of the Malian nymphs (*ib.* 725f.), is called sacred (*ib.* 1215). All rivers, in fact, as the abode of river-gods, are sacred;⁴ but here the epithet *ἱερός* has a special force, which *ἐκθρόνις* (*ib.* 1216) brings out; for the hero has at this point in the play voluntarily withdrawn himself from the realm of the friendly nature deities to whom he had appealed at 1040ff. Ajax also addresses the near-by streams (*Aj.* 412). In fr. 956 the Eurotus is appealed to in an oath. The Inachus, too, receives special mention; in fact, one of the satyr plays of Sophocles is named after this river-god, who is called⁵ *πατήρ* (fr. 284) and also *νάτορ παῖ τοῦ κρηνῶν πατρὸς Ωκεανοῦ* (fr. 256). In fr. 1270 there is likewise an address to this river-god. He is said to have a *νόμος* like that of the dead⁶ (fr. 284). This probably refers to the customary tribute⁷ of a lock of hair.⁸ In fr. 911 we find an address to the *συγγονθ' ὕδωρ*,—an expression which has a much fuller meaning than 'river of my native land'; for it points to a feeling of natural kinship with the river, which was regarded as a protector of youth. Another prayer to river-gods occurs in *Aj.* 883f., where the chorus beseech the Bosporian streams to help them discover the whereabouts of their chief. Furthermore (*Tr.*

² Meinike objects that Philoctetes cannot properly ask the island for a prosperous voyage. But Jebb compares *Il.* 67, where Orestes prays Argus and her gods to welcome him.

³ For the sanctity of the waters of Gr. and the powers with which they were associated in Gk. religion, cf. Halliday, *Gk. Divination*, 116ff.

⁴ Cf. *Il.* 23, 148. The purity of rivers, etc., was a matter of religious care to the Greeks, as clear water was considered necessary for their sacred libations (cf. e.g. *O.C.* 471, *Il.* XXIV. 303).

⁵ Cf. *Il.* XIV, 302.

⁶ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 6, where the same comparison is implied between the nurture lock and the mourning lock.

⁷ On the tribute of a lock of hair to a river, cf. *Il.* 23.140 and Paus. I, 37. 3, VIII. 41.3.

⁸ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 6, *Sept.* 294.

11ff.) we are told how the river-god Achelous⁹ wooed Deianira in three shapes,—as a bull, a serpent, and as a man. Here the word ἐναργῆς seems to imply that the shape of a bull was the proper and acknowledged symbol of a river-god.¹⁰

Springs play no small part in Greek religion.¹¹ The farewell address of Philoctetes to the springs of Lemnus implies a great devotion (*Ph.* 1461). Antigone likewise makes her final appeal to the springs of Dirce (*Ant.* 842). In like manner, just before he dies, Ajax invokes the springs of the surrounding region (*Aj.* 862). So too in *O.C.* 1333 Polyneices appeals to his father by the springs. These springs are referred to as sleepless, as though they were personal forces (*ib.* 685). In fr. 911 the Hyperion spring is called a ‘current best beloved by the gods,’—with reference to the association of Apollo with this region.

The worship associated with springs, mountains, etc., survived to some extent in the cult of Pan and the nymphs. The nymphs of the mountains and sea are frequently mentioned. As the nurse of Hermes, Celene, a mountain-nymph, plays an important part in the *Ichneutae* (fr. 314). At ll. 218ff. of this drama the nymphs seem to be represented in close association with Apollo, while at l. 35 the satyrs are called their children. Echo,¹² another mountain-nymph, is said to make her appearance at the sound of Philoctetes’ voice (*Ph.* 188). She is here called τηλεφανῆς, as though, in answer to the hero’s call, she were coming forth from a distant secret abode. Amalthea, another nymph, is mentioned in fr. 3. In *O.T.* 1099 the chorus suggest that the hero may be the son of one of the mountain-nymphs. The Salaminian chorus, when praying for help, refer to these same nymphs (*Aj.* 882).

Amphitrite, one of the sea-nymphs, is referred to in several places (fr. 673, 762; *O.T.* 194). She is ‘all-embracing’ (fr. 673) and is evidently considered as the special sea-divinity presiding

⁹ Such a myth signifies the idea of the procreative power of water: cf. Frazer *G.C.* II, 161f. The tribute of a lock of hair to a river likewise originally indicated this idea.

¹⁰ Achelaus is the river-god *par excellence* in Gk. and Lat. literature, as we know from the notes of Servius on *Verg. Georg.* I. 9, Ephous on *Macrob. Sat.* V. 18, and Frazer on *Paus.* I. 5. 27.

¹¹ Cf. e.g. Eur. *Bacch.* 520, where the fountain Dirce is addressed with great reverence.

¹² Echo is not a distinctly recognized deity in the classical age: she is spoken of as little more than a personified abstraction.

over the Atlantic, which is called the ‘great hold (or chamber)¹³ of Amphitrite’ (*O.T.* 194). Thetis, one of her famous sister nymphs, is said to be ‘many formed’; her powers of transformation are referred to also in fr. 160.¹⁴ Amphitrite, Thetis, and the other Nereids, the mythological representatives of the sea’s kindly moods, are represented by Sophocles as being fifty in number (*O.C.* 714).¹⁵

In *Ph.* 734f. the words *ανλάν / μαλιά δων νύμφαν* suggest the streams, hills, and woods of Malis (cf. *Tr.* 215). So, too, the woodland nymphs of Parnassus (*Ant.* 1128), of Nysa (*O.C.* 679f.), Helicon (*O.T.* 1109), and Lemnus (*Ph.* 1454) are so intimately associated with these places that the mention of these elemental spirits connotes the rural scenery of their habitat. Philoctetes, in bidding farewell to the ‘Nymphs of the streams and the meadows’ (*ib.* 1454), is really making his valediction to the whole region.¹⁶ Here and in his farewell prayer to the nymphs of the sea (*ib.* 1470), the power of these divinities is acknowledged. The name of these nymphs is associated with that of Apollo (*Ichn.* 218f.,—fr. 314) and with that of the satyrs (*ib.* 35), particularly the satyr Silenus (*ib.* 149).

Though reference to them is comparatively slight, the muses also received attention in these plays. They are among the special patrons of Colonus (*O.C.* 690f.). Reference is made in *Ant.* 963ff. to the myth about the presumptuous rivalry of the Thracian Lycurgus with the muses, who are here called *φιλαύλους* (*ib.* 963). Only one muse is spoken of in a fragment of the lost play *Daedalus* (fr. 643) where the epithets *θεῖα* and *τεκτόναρχος* (‘divine architect of dance and song’) are applied to her.¹⁷

¹³ Rumpel *De deor ap. Soph. Epith.* p. 9, suggests that this epithet refers to ‘the sea’s embracing all the lands,’ or it may be explained as descriptive of the sea ‘where many men navigate.’

¹⁴ Such a metamorphoses of sea-divinities may, as Jebb suggests, symbolize the unstable character of that element. For evidence of the cult of the nymphs as water-divinities, cf. Ballentrie, *Harv. Stud.* XV. 77ff.

¹⁵ Cf. Aes. fr. 164: Eur. *Andr.* 1267, *I.T.* 427, *ib.* 263, *I.A.* 1056, *Ion* 1087.

¹⁶ For the cult of the nymphs at Lesbos cf. I.G. XII. 129; Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* I. 4. 13, II. 17. 34, III, 12. 16, IV. 15; Rouse *Gk. Votive Offerings* 46 n. 3; Shilds, *Cults of Lesbos* 71f.

¹⁷ Ritter rejects ll. 1461-1471, arguing that the nymphs had no power over the sea; that, he says, was considered entirely under the control of Poseidon. But Jebb argues that in the old Greek conception the sea-nymphs not only represented, but also influenced, the various moods of the sea (cf. Hes. *Th.* 250ff.).

Among the other semi-divine mythological characters are the three graces, referred to only in fr. 545, where the epithet *τριῶνγοι* denotes a trinity¹⁸ of coördinate functions, and points to a closer union than when the word is used with reference to Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite (e.g. fr. 461).

The wind-god Boreas also is mentioned but once (*Ant.* 984ff.). Wings are attributed to the wind-gods mentioned in fr. 23. The ancients considered the winds chthonic in origin, as is evident from their cult and from the fact that winds, or rather wind-gods, were supposed to dwell in caves.¹⁹ The ruler of the stormy winds is the father of the unfortunate Cleopatra, represented as dwelling in a cave (*Ant.* 985). A sort of cave (*χλοερὸν ἥλωδη πάγον*) is likewise the dwelling place of Cyllene, who guards there the infant god Hermes.²¹

Pan, another nature divinity, is called, 'the mountain-roving father' (*O.T.* 1100).²⁰ As a god, connected with song and dance, he is called upon by the chorus to take part in their hyporcheme of joy at the recovery of their chief from madness (*Aj.* 592f.). In l. 669 the god is styled the 'chorus-making lord of gods'²² the words *θεῶν . . . ἄναξ* being a mere complimentary title used of any god when particularly invoked.²³ In l. 695 the epithet *ἀλιπλαγκτε* is applied to Pan; though he is not usually considered a sea-divinity, he might be so styled 'ob negotia maritima,'²⁴ as his devotees here doubtless knew of the god's partiality for the island of Psyttalia.²⁵ This reputed haunt of the god was so near Salamis that these Salimian sailors apparently look upon Pan as a domestic deity. The dances

¹⁸ Cf. Harrison, *Proleg.* 286fff., for a discussion of this and other maiden trinities. Also cf. Escher in Pauly-Wiss. III. 215f.

¹⁹ Cf. Stengel, *Hermes* XVI, 1881, 346ff., *ib.* XXXV, 1900, 627f.: Hewitt, *Harv. Stud.*, 1908, XIX, 76.

²⁰ Cf. Aes. *Pers.* 371, where Pan is called 'lover of song and dance' (philochorus).

²¹ Cf. Harrison's "Cyllene's Hill-cave" in *Essays and Studies Presented to Wm. Ridgeway*, Camb. Univ. Press, 1913, 136ff.

²² Cf. Pind. fr. 67.

²³ Among the Greeks, as among all people, a sort of mystery or magic is connected with caves; cf. Aes. *Eum.* 22 and Eur. *Phoen.* 232.

²⁴ Cf. Theoc. V. 14.

²⁵ Blaydes interprets this passage as 'show thyself wandering over the sea.' It is a noteworthy fact that Cyllene, and not Psyttalia, is mentioned in this line. Lobeck suggests that the explanation of this is that the former place was the more particular and better known residence of the god. Gebhard, citing Hom. h. 19 31 and schol. 3 on Eur. *Rhes.* 36, says that Cyllene is probably used here merely as a poetic substitute for Arcadia.

in which he is asked to lead them are called *Nίστια κυωσ'* / *δρυχήματα*, thus denoting a character of wild enthusiasm, and referring to the dances that the Bacchae held in honor of Dionysus (l. 700), as well as to the dances of the Cretans in honor of Zeus and Apollo (*ib.* 697). We are told, on doubtful authority,²⁶ that Sophocles in his lost play *Andromeda* (fr. 136) spoke of several Pans.²⁷

Asclepius is another semi-divine being mentioned by Sophocles; in fact, he was especially noted for the respect shown the Asclepius cult in his plays.²⁸ In *Ph.* 1437, where it is said that Asclepius will cure Philoctetes, the epithets²⁹ *παιών* and *εὐμενῆς* are applied to the wonder-working physician. The cult of the healer Asclepius had been introduced into Athens long before the time of Sophocles and had become quite popular among the sick and infirm.³⁰

Niobe, another being closely associated with the gods, is regarded as a type of sufferer whose grief is inconsolable; hence, Antigone in the midst of her own misfortune, recalls Niobe's sad story (*Ant.* 823). Electra likewise in a frenzy of lamentation, cries out: *ἰδὲ παντλάμων Νιόβα, οὐδὲ δ' ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν*. This appellative 'divine' is not used in the exact sense of the word, but seems to mark the great honor and respect attached to Niobe on account of her incessant grief. It should be noted, however, that she is elsewhere represented as being of semi-divine origin; cf. *ib.* 834, where she is called *θεός* and *θεογενῆς*.³¹

Hero-cult was an important phase of ancient Greek religion.³²

²⁶ Cf. schol. ad. *Theoc.* 462.

²⁷ For other early evidence of the plural of Pan cf. Ar. *Ecccl.* 1069 and Plat. *Legg.* 815C. This point is discussed by Kaibel, (*Gottinger Nachrichten*, 1901. p. 493) and by Reisch (*Festschr. f. th. Gomperz*, 1902, Zur Vorgeschichte d. attischen Trag., p. 457).

²⁸ Cf. *Etym. Mag.* 256, 7-13.

²⁹ That is one of the regular epithets of Asclepius: cf. Gruppe 1455f., Thraemer in Pauly-Wiss. II. 1677, Pearson C.R. XXV. 246.

³⁰ Cf. F. Kutsch, *Attische Heilgötter u. Heilheroen* (Giessen diss., 1913), discusses the introduction of the Asclepius cult into Athens.

³¹ For the masculine form used of a feminine divinity, cf. *Ant.* 1199; O.C. 1548, 1556. The word *theos* is further applied to such inanimate things as a bow (*Ph.* 657); time (*El.* 179); a plague (O.T. 27). So likewise the word *divinus* and *deus* are frequently used.

³² Hardie (*Lectures on Classical Subjects*, p. 45) discusses the distinction between hero-cult and the worship held in honor of the Olympian gods. In hero-cult, the altar (*eschara*) was usually a round hollow structure, not closed at the base. Altars of this kind have been found at Mycenae and elsewhere.

The worship of the hero,³³ carried on near the place said to be his grave, encouraged the idea of immortality and of post-humous glorification for exceptional merit. As the spirits of these honored dead were believed to be endowed with peculiar posthumous powers to bless or curse the living, offerings were personally made at their tombs.³⁴ The connection of religion with the life of the state often found such a focus as a celebrated grave on which the prosperity of the community was thought to depend.³⁵

The sacred spots dedicated to Theseus and Perithous at Colonus are referred to in *O.C.* 1563f. Amphiaraus is likewise mentioned as the recipient of divine honor (*El.* 837, 841; *O.C.* 1313; frs. 186, 785). One of the lost plays (frs. 113f.) received the name of this hero, whose cult had grown to be considerably important in Greece by the time of Sophocles.³⁶ The story of his betrayal and mysterious disappearance beneath the earth is referred to, but not narrated, in *El.* 836ff. and in fr. 985. Because of his association with Poseidon, in the devotions of the sacred grove at Colonus, the hero Colonus, who is also called *ἐπώγυμος* (*O.C.* 65),³⁷ received the title *ἱππότης* (*O.C.* 59). The natives claimed him as their eponymous leader (*ib.* 60, 65), just as their neighbors, the Athenians, claimed Erechtheus (*Aj.* 202, *Ant.* 981f.).

In the *Oedipus Coloneus* the effect of hero-worship is represented as a living force among the people. This play, whose fundamental idea is the importance of the possession of the body of Oedipus (cf. e.g., ll. 92f., 287, 308f., 459ff.), is a most important witness to the

³³ Cf. A. Hoppe, *Heroenlehre d. Gr.*, Lamb. 1876. H. Hubert (*Travaux de L'École des Hautes Études, Société des Anciens Étudiants de l'Université de Paris*, 1914) deals with the social conditions which beget heroes.

³⁴ The Gk. term *heros* gradually gained a wider application than its original meaning. Hesychius, s.v., explains it as powerful, 'strong,' 'noble,' or 'godlike.' Then, since the dead were regarded as more powerful than the living, this cult adjective in time came to be used as a substantive (just as *Kore* developed),—applied the ordinary dead, as we see from numerous sepulchral inscriptions.

³⁵ More elaborate services were held at *heroa* than at the graves of the ordinary dead, as the heroes were thought to have great influence with the gods.

³⁶ F. Kutsch, *op. cit.*, gives an account of the growth and diffusion of the Amphiaraus cult.

³⁷ This word is often thus used as a generic term used to denote a being who has received divine honors. e.g., the heroes Amphron and Zethus (*Ar. Achar.* 905) and Academus (*Eupolis* fr. 3) are so called.

cult of heroes.³⁸ The sacred tomb of Oedipus³⁹ must be duly revered if abiding good fortune is desired (*ib.* 1545): for this sacred spot is regarded as a great blessing to the land that sheltered him, and as a guarantee of victory against the Thebans (*ib.* 287f., 459f., 627f., 1553ff.). So the Oracle had declared (*ib.* 387ff.), and for this reason the Thebans seek to gain possession of the person of Oedipus (*ib.* 728ff.). The keeping secret of place where he died is an ingenious device for accounting for the fact that in Sophocles' own time no one knew the location of the hero's grave at Colonus.

The myths about Heracles were treated in several of the lost plays; the *Herc. ad. Taen.*, the *Herakleiskus*, and the *Amphitrio*: possibly the subject was touched upon also in the *Peleus*, the *Polydus*, the *Tyndarus*, the *Phil. in Troys*, the *Prometheus* (frs. 224-234). This popular hero is the leading character in the *Trachiniae*: for even when our attention is focused on Deianira's hopes and fears, our thoughts are constantly returning to Heracles, as the ultimate cause and center of her emotions. Though born of Zeus⁴⁰ (cf. *ib.* 802, 943, 1415), Heracles, because of his mother's race and his reputed birthplace (*ib.* 510, 1154), is claimed by the Thebans as one of the stock of Cadmus⁴¹ (cf. *ib.* 116). His labors are referred to here in ll. 36, 159, 170, 1047, 1058f., and 1091ff. He also plays a prominent part in the *Philoctetes*. Here the whole plot turns on the attempt to get possession of the sacred bow,⁴² which Heracles has bequeathed Philoctetes, and the appearance of the former as a divine messenger solves the difficulty in the end.

³⁸ The deictic word *tonde* here probably marks the presence of a statue of Colonus on the stage.

³⁹ There were two *heroa* in Attica sacred to Oedipus, one on the Areopagus (cf. Paus. I. 28.7 and Val. Max. V. 33) and the other at Colonus (cf. the *Oedipus at Colonus*. and also Eur. *Phoen.* 1707, Paus. I. 30.4, schol. on *Od.* XI. 271, Apollod. III. 59).

⁴⁰ Belief in the divine descent of families, and of legendary founders of cities, form a connecting link between the human and divine spheres; cf. W. Fowler, *Rel. Ideas of Duty*, p. 94, and articles in Hastings, *Encyc. Relig. and Ethics* IV. 525 and in dictionaries of antiquity, s.v. *genos*.

⁴¹ The cult of Heracles was localized in various parts of Greece. The affinity of the stories regarding this favorite Gk. hero with numerous Eastern myths of a similar character has been well established, thus making clear their common inheritance.

⁴² It is not surprising that the bow of Heracles is said to be sacred and irresistible. The weapons of all the solar heroes—Achilles, Theseus, Sigurd, Rustum, etc.—are all so regarded.

X. VIEWS REGARDING DEATH

In Sophocles, as in Aeschylus and Euripides,¹ the characters often attribute death to the agency of some god (*O.T.* 27; *Aj.* 900, 970), more especially of Zeus (*O.C.* 1460), Athena (*Aj.* 952f.), Apollo (*Ph.* 335), Artemis (*O.C.* 1092), and Ares (*O.T.* 190, *Aj.* 706). These, however, are not the gods who receive the dead. It is Hades, Persephone, and Hermes who perform that office (*O.C.* 1548, 1559, *Ant.* 810, 893).

According to some of Sophocles' characters, death is a great calamity (*ib.* 220, 580 ff., *Aj.* 215). Sometimes, indeed, it is felt to be so great an affliction as to be merited only by one who has committed sin against the gods (*Aj.* 952ff., *El.* 1349ff.).² The agony of parting from loved ones is emphatically deplored in *Aj.* 545ff., *Ant.* 866f.; *O.C.* 1604ff., 1611ff., 1640ff.; *Tr.* 1143ff.³ Mention has already been made of the passionate farewells of the dying to nature, especially to the sunlight (*O.C.* 1549f., *Aj.* 412ff.).⁴ The brevity of life as compared with the infinity of time after death is frequently dwelt upon (*Ant.* 74, fr. 568, fr. 572).⁵ Statement of the impossibility of bringing the dead back to life is a commonplace (*Ph.* 624; *El.* 940; *O.C.* 557, 1706; fr. 510).⁶ In fr. 67 the speaker characteristically declares; 'Death comes but once, so life is sweeter than all other gifts.'⁷ It was this love of life that caused suicide to be so deprecated by the Greeks (cf. *Aj.* 911, *Tr.* 889). 'No one is so mad as to be enamoured of death' cries the chorus in *Ant.* 220. Yet a desire for death is quite commonly expressed (*O.C.* 1220f., 1686; *El.* 822; *O.T.* 1157; *Ant.* 473, 643, 1329ff.; *Tr.* 16f., frs. 488, 698, 952).⁸ These expressions of longing for death, however, are not always to be taken

¹ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1451f., *Cho.* 910f., *Eum.* 724, *Sept.* 609f., 1204; Eur. *Ion.* 1244f., *Alc.* 297f.

² Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 246f., *Bacch.* 120f.

³ Cf. Eur. *Hec.* 402f., *Alc.* 156ff., *Her.* 574ff., *I.A.* 1434.

⁴ Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 244f., *Hec.* 435ff., *I.A.* 1509.

⁵ Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 672, etc. The idea is a commonplace in Gk. literature.

⁶ Cf. e.g. *Eum.*

⁷ Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 1076, *Her.* 297, *Supp.* 775.

⁸ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1538, *Pers.* 712, *Supp.* 804ff.; Eur. *Med.* 146f., *Hec.* 497f.

seriously; they are often the result of transitory emotion. Only in cases where one is involved in overwhelming disgrace (e.g., Ajax, Deianira), or in an agony of grief and despair (e.g. Eurydice, Jocasta), or in the absence of other honorable means of avoiding a lingering death (e.g., Antigone), does a character resort to suicide.

There are, indeed, a number of consolatory passages about death. The inevitableness of death is suggested as a consolation also in *Tr.* 120; *O.T.* 472; *El.* 860, 1172; *Ant.* 361f.; *O.C.* 1220ff., fr. 952). Both Philoctetes (*Ph.* 797) and Ajax (*Aj.* 831f., 854), earnestly call upon death to come to their rescue. Likewise Oedipus, aged, blind, and weary of disgrace and wandering, longs for the peace and rest of death (*O.C.* 1ff., 1574, 1640ff., 1777ff.). Moreover, the nobility of one's death gives some comfort (*ib.* 1225; *Aj.* 479f.; *Ant.* 817ff., fr. 751). Various other comforting thoughts regarding death are offered:⁹ the frailty of human life (fr. 593), the instability of good fortune (frs. 106, 592, 667),¹⁰ and the general uncertainty of the future (*Aj.* 555, 877, fr. 392, 593, 845). The commonplace that 'No man is happy till dead' is stated at the close of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* and also in frs. 646 and 662. Life is similarly disparaged in the frequent comparison of human existence (*El.* 1159, *Aj.* 125; *Ant.* 1170; frs. 860, 945, 959) to a breath or a shadow.¹¹ Symbols of weakness and worthlessness (cf. *O.C.* 382; *Ph.* 946; frs. 12, 307). So frequent, indeed, are these references to the restlessness to the uncertainty to the struggles and suffering of life, to the relative comfort, to the healing, and to the possible reunion after death, that not a few scholars have felt that an undertone of melancholy pervades the plays of Sophocles.¹²

Death is represented as cloud, in *Tr.* 299, 831, and as a journey in *Aj.* 571; *Ant.* 868, 893, 897; *Ph.* 1211.¹³ Life is said to depart at

⁹ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1304, *P.V.* 103ff. Cf. also the hope of meeting one's kinsfolk in the afterworld, a hope which Antigone expresses as a consolation for death (*Ant.* 868, 893f., 897ff.). Yet J. M. Linforth (*Cl. Phil.* XIII. I. 102, 1918), in speaking of the Greek attitude towards death, says "Greek religion had never any consolations to offer the dying or the bereaved."

¹⁰ 'Agencies of destruction hover about it' (fr. 592). Pearson, comparing this passage with *Ag.* 392ff., remarks on the mournful tone of resignation in Sophocles as compared with the fervor of Aeschylus.

¹¹ Life had often been compared to a shadow before Sophocles made this comparison: cf. e.g. *Pind.* VIII. 95.

¹² Cf. e.g. M.M. Daniel *C.R.* IV. 91.

¹³ The phraseology may have been affected by the journey of the body to the tomb.

death 'like a bird on nimble wing, swifter than resistless fire, to the shore of the western god' (*O.T.* 175ff.). Death is also compared to marriage (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 891, 1205). The Greeks associated these states quite often, especially in tragedy. Thus Antigone says that she will be married to Acheron (*ib.* 816),¹⁴ and the messenger speaks in a similar metaphorical manner (*ib.* 1124f.; cf. *Tr.* 445, *O.C.* 1221f.).

¹⁴ Cf. Eur. *I.A.* 1399, *Med.* 985.

XI. STATUS OF THE DEAD

Strange inconsistency in the treatment of life after death¹ appears in Greek tragedy. The tragedians do not definitely commit themselves on this subject; at times they rather question the whole matter and nowhere do they clearly express a conviction of the feeling and consciousness of the dead.² The *Antigone*, the *Ajax*, and the *Oedipus at Colonus* are the Sophoclean plays most fruitful of material on this matter. In each case the leading character, nearing death, very naturally reflects upon the prospect for the future. The conception of the state of the dead here represented, especially in the *Antigone* and the *Oedipus Coloneus*, is far in advance of that in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*. Antigone's natural affection leads her to a firm belief in the permanence of personal existence after death.³ For to her the hope of happiness in a future life is inseparable from the thought of reunion with departed loved ones. Many times, as if to reassure herself, she asserts that she will meet her kinsfolk in the afterworld (*Ant.* 868, 893ff., 897.). Higher standards of right and wrong entertained there (*ib.* 521), it seems to her, and so she is positive that her defiance of the harsh proclamation will find favor, not condemnation, among the dead (*ib.* 89, 515, 557). She likewise expresses belief in reciprocity of love in the afterworld (*ib.* 73, 898f.). Both here (*ib.* 75f., 450ff., etc.) and in *O.C.* 1700ff., Antigone pledges allegiance and love to her dead. Like Electra (*El.* 355f.), she considers it far more important to please those with whom she will abide forever (*Ant.* 75) than to obey any temporal authorities (*ib.* 89).

One of the most vital points in this question of belief in a future life is the view held of the nature of the soul. Like other ancient peoples, the Greeks conceived of the soul as vapor, breath, wind,

¹ Immortality is one of the earliest beliefs of the human race. Anthropologists declare that no sav. race exists which does not believe in some sort of immortality.

² Aes. can only say, e.g. that the funeral fire does not destroy the spirit (*Cho.* 323ff.). Eur. is likewise vague (cf. e.g. *Hel.* 1014, *Med.* 1073, *Heracl.* 594, frs. 536, 1007.

³ For expressions of hope of reunion in the afterworld, cf. *Ph.* 1210f.; *Aj.* 865; Aes. *Ag.* 1555; Eur. *El.* 1144; *Hel.* 836.; *Tro.* 1234; *Alc.* 363.

smoke, force or shadow.⁴ Sophocles represents it as a shadowy spirit, one that sometimes may assume a winged form (fr. 879) and be reabsorbed into the aether,—an idea of great religious inspiration.⁵ The soul of the dead is commonly referred to as unsubstantial (e.g. *El.* 1152, *Aj.* 1257).⁶ Sometimes (e.g. *El.* 1159) it is regarded as powerless to help the living. More often, however, the spirit of the dead is regarded as a force endowed with power to aid or to injure the living. Friends who had been kind to the deceased in life, and those who have piously paid them honor after death, receive benefit from the spirits of the departed (*O.C.* 411, 1520ff.; *Aj.* 1171ff.; *El.* 1167ff.).⁷

More frequently, spirits are thought of as vengeful (*Aj.* 1027; *El.* 498ff., 1419ff.; *Tr.* 208, 282, 1901f.).⁸ In the imagination of all, except such rare spirits as Antigone, resentment was supposed to continue after death (e.g. *Aj.* 1376ff.). And even Antigone thinks that the vengeful wrath of the dead would be aroused if the customary rites of burial should be neglected (*Ant.* 94). Ismene, too, though she will not cooperate with her sister in the burial of her brother, is evidently fearful of the dead and therefore begs forgiveness of Polyneices for complying with the official command of Creon (*ib.* 65f.).

In exacting retribution for wrongs inflicted upon them, the dead are sometimes said to be endowed with cursed power (fr. 110, 399; *Tr.* 1202; *El.* 792). In *Tr.* 1202 it is threatened that the curse of the dying Heracles may last forever.⁹ All the baneful fortunes of the house of Pelops are said to have originated in the curse of the murdered Myrtilus (*ib.* 508ff.). Likewise, the unforgetful vengeance of Agamemnon pervades the whole *Electra* (cf. e.g. 459f., 485f., 1419ff.).

⁴ All the terms developed to designate the discarnate spirit show these underlying meanings. Cf. Paton p. 69.

⁵ Here, in accordance with popular superstition, the souls are represented as bees. For an exhaustive treatise on this subject cf. A. B. Cook, *J.H.S.* XVI. 24.

⁶ Cf. Eur. *Hel.* 1240.

⁷ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 767ff., 597; *Her.* 1030ff.; Iwanowitch *op. cit.* p. 51. The cult of the hero at the tomb is based upon this supposition that the dead were in some sense alive and locally present. It is clear that this belief that ghosts of dead flit around their tombs arose at a period when the Greeks buried their dead; whereas, when cremation came into general practice, the abode of the dead was thought of as a far-off, shadowy place to which the spirit flitted when it left its funeral pyre.

⁸ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 345ff.; *Cho.* 524ff. *Eum.* 768ff.

⁹ Possibly with the implication that the effect of the curse will last even after death; cf. *ib.* 1239f.; *Ant.* 1075ff.; Aes. *Eum.* 340.

The Greek tragedians do not consistently represent the dead as having knowledge of the events occurring among the living. Whether conscious of the present or not, however, the dead are often represented as mindful of what has happened in their own lifetime (e.g. *ib.* 482). Yet even though the Greeks admitted the existence of the dead as spirits with the memory of the past, at times doubt is expressed as to the power of those on earth to reach and to touch them. Thus Electra, in speaking of doing honor to the dead, adds *εἰ τις ἐστ’ ἐκεὶ χάρις* (*El.* 356). This wistful expression of uncertainty about the other world does not suggest that she believes her father incapable of feeling anything,—for her whole conduct is based on the belief that his spirit constantly craves vengeance (cf. 453)—; but she does express doubt as to whether such transient flashes of pleasure as the living feel can reach the abode of the dead.¹⁰ Likewise, when she says *οὐ μέν θανὼν γὰρ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὄν* (*ib.* 244), Electra by no means suggests that Agamemnon's spirit is extinct (cf. *ib.* 839):¹¹ she merely implies that for her to abandon grief for his death would be to act as if this were so.

Still there are several passages in Sophocles where it seems that the dead are vaguely felt to be forgetful of earth and unconscious of pleasure and pain. This opinion of the dead is sometimes said to be the prevailing one in Greek literature.¹² Thus when a report comes to Electra that her brother has been killed (*El.* 1159), she wishes to die herself: *τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὁρῶ λυπουμένους* (*ib.* 1170). Heracles speaks in a similar strain: *τοῖς γὰρ θανοῦσι μόχθος οὐ προσγίγνεται* (*Tr.* 1173; cf. *ib.* 829f.). Creon, too, represents the dead as untouched by emotion (*O.C.* 955).¹³ So we see that as far as insult (*ib.* 955, *Aj.* 1343), toil (*Tr.* 829f., 1173; *O.C.* 1361, 1561ff., 1706ff.), and grief (*El.* 1159, 1170; *Tr.* 303ff.) are concerned, the condition of the dead is represented as superior to that of the living.

Yet assurance of such non-feeling after death is not always expressed, as we have seen in the *Antigone* and elsewhere (*Ant.* 25, 65, 74, 514; *O.C.* 411, 1702ff.; *El.* 292, 326ff., 355, 379, 453, 459, 807ff., 1066f., 1421f.). On the *Electra* (1066f.) Sophocles represents

¹⁰ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 517; *Eum.* 401.

¹¹ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 346ff., 470ff.

¹² Cf. Schneidewin on *El.* 356.

¹³ For the peace of the dead cf. Aes. *Cho.* 517.

the dead as receiving news of the living through a *χθονία . . . φάμα*.¹⁴ The recompense for suffering offered to Antigone by the chorus (*Ant.* 831ff.), is the hope of posthumous fame.¹⁵ Such, too, is the reward promised Oedipus by the oracle (*O.C.* 621ff.).¹⁶ Rites of the dead were considered indispensable because the belief seems to have been held by the Greeks that the well-being of the soul depended, not so much upon the life it had lived in the world, as upon the ritual of burial and the later service paid it by the living. Thus Eteocles is buried with due rites 'for his honor among the dead below' (*Ant.* 23ff.).

Do the dead themselves suffer penalty for the wrong done in this life? We find no direct answer in Sophocles, though punishment of the dead is, perhaps, tacitly implied in *O.C.* 1389f. and *El.* 291f. The influence of the mysteries is a disturbing element in this vital problem.¹⁷ Special and exclusive happiness is claimed for those initiated in the purificatory rites of the Eleusis:—'Thrice blessed are they who, having seen these mysteries, go to Hades: for to them only in that life there is life; the rest have utter misery' (fr. 837).¹⁸ In fr. 891, also, initiation is represented as carrying with it, as a certain result, happiness in a future life. The soothing religious influence of the mysteries is further implied in *O.C.* 1050ff., where Eleusinian goddesses are said to cherish the rites of their faithful votaries. But how is this apparent belief in the power of the mysteries to confer exclusive privileges in the other world to be reconciled with belief in the infallibility of divine justice?¹⁹ This is a difficult

¹⁴ Eur. sometimes speaks of the dead as dwellers in a distant land who learn of things on earth through the arrival of newcomers, cf. e.g. *Hec.* 136ff.; 422f. and *Her.* 320f.

¹⁵ Cf. Chap. on Chthonic Ceremonies.

¹⁶ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1303, *Sept.* 670; Pind. P. IV. 187. For an answer to such consolations cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1304.

¹⁷ Rohde (*Psyche* I. 288ff.) holds that the doctrine of immortality was a fundamental postulate of the Eleusinian religion.

¹⁸ Through rites of spiritual purification, the mysteries were supposed to procure the special favor of the chthonic powers. To this Heracles in the *Her.* of Eur. (l. 613) attributes his success in the conflict with Cereberus (cf. Ar. *Ran.* 156). To this belief in the future happiness secured through initiation, we may without doubt ascribe the extraordinary influence of the Eleusinian cult. Cf. Harrison: *Relig. of Anc. Gr.*, p. 49.

¹⁹ Cf. Chap. on the attitude towards the gods. Kaufman (*Die Jenseitshoffnungen d. Gr. u. Roem.* p. 3f.) says that these passages on the mysteries represents Sophocles' general belief. But Iwanowitsch (*op. cit.* 51, 53) claims that Sophocles represents neither reward nor punishment in the life after death, and that here he merely pays a tribute to the Eleusinians.

problem: for the Sophoclean characters do not appear to believe in a rigid predestination, and certainly Dike is represented as essentially concerned with the protection of the rights of the dead (*Ant.* 451).²⁰ But nowhere does Sophocles specify righteousness of one's life as a conditional requirement for the happiness of the soul after death. In their view of life after death, the tragedians do not seem to have believed that any clear distinction was made between the good and bad morally. In the absence of such standards, the 'nobles' are represented as favored in the after-world, as in this. The souls of heroes especially are thought of as enjoying a higher sort of existence than that of the masses: 'Achilles, once noblest of men in life, is noblest now among the dead' (*Ph.* 1312f.). The hero Amphiarus is likewise spoken of as preeminent among the spirits of the dead *πάυψις ἀνάστοι*, (*El.* 841).²¹ Reward after death is mentioned in *Ant.* 925ff., while punishment in the afterworld is referred to in *Ph.* 315ff. and in *Ant.* 1064ff. Occasionally we find reference to reward or punishment after death given in form of a myth,—e.g. the myth of the tortures of Ixion (*O.C.* 1556).

Many human feelings and relationships seem to be regarded as surviving in the afterworld. As we have noted, Sophocles agrees with the other tragedians in generally attributing to the dead the power of perceiving what is done in this world, of loving and aiding their friends, and of hating and injuring their enemies²² (*El.* 347, 400, 826, 1416, etc.; *Ant.* 65, 94, 442, 515, 524, 528, 542, etc.; *Tr.* 1204, etc.; *Ph.* 1312, etc.; *Aj.* 1394f.; *O.C.* 287f., 459f., 627f., 1545, 1552ff.). The most beautiful and touching presentation of this view is given in Antigone's farewell speech (*Ant.* 891ff., 925f.). A striking instance of belief in the survival of memory and remorse among the dead is given also in the words of Oedipus: 'How could I have looked upon my father, when I came to the place of the dead, or upon my mother?' (*O.T.* 1372). His blindness is thus clearly represented as something that will remain with in the future life.

²⁰ For Dike as a chthonic divinity cf. chap. on the chthonic gods. Among the Pythagoreans she was thought to hold the same place with Hades as that of Themis with Olympian Zeus; cf. Iambl. *de Pyth. vita* 9, Theages in Stob. Ec. III. 79, 5ff. (in Mulloch's *frs. Phil. Gr.* I. 19). Cf. Eur. *Med.* 1390.

²¹ Jebb explains this as meaning having full psychical power; i.e. that the mind of Amph. acts upon men through his oracles as fully as though he were alive.

²² Fear of the spirits of the dead, though practically ignored in Homer, was an abiding component of the religion of ancient Greeks.

Continuity of physical defects after the death of the body is mentioned also in *El.* 1227.²³ Furthermore, the dead are occasionally represented as talking in the other world²⁴ (*Aj.* 855, 865; *O.C.* 998f.), though incapable of reaching the living by speech (*El.* 548). Moreover, the dead are represented as responsible for dream-visitations (*El.* 417ff.). Yet among the Greeks were some who did not believe that the dead could keep in any direct relation with those on earth (fr. 210).

We see, then, that while the matter of life after death is frequently referred to, there is little certain evidence to show any deep conviction of a personal existence of the soul after separation from the body. Most of the passages bearing on this question represent merely the current popular indistinct conception of a future existence in an underworld. Possibly this sense of what was dramatically fitting constrained the Greek tragedians from committing themselves more definitely on the question of life after death: they may have thought that lofty ideas about immortality would not be in harmony with their traditional themes.

²³ Cf. Eur. *El.* 1144, *I.A.* 451, *Or.* 1109.

²⁴ As we have mentioned in the preceding chapter, even marriage in the underworld is referred to in several passages (cf. *Ant.* 363f., 750, 816, 1240). Most of these references, however, are merely metaphorical expressions. Cf. Eur. *Heracl.* 594.

XII. VIEWS OF THE AFTERWORLD

In dealing with the question of the soul after its separation from the body, the human mind does not easily avoid some kind of mythology. Now the prevalent Greek conception of the organization and scenery of the afterworld was drawn largely from Homer. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the Homeric imagery survives to a large extent in Sophocles, the most Homeric of the tragic poets;¹ in his plays the souls of the dead are still represented, for the most part, as abiding in a place vaguely located either under the ground (e.g. *O.C.* 1559, *Aj.* 571) or in the West (*O.T.* 178).²

In a few cases, indeed, the upper air³ seems to be thought of as the abode of souls;⁴ thus in fr. 879 the souls of the dead are said to pass up in the air like bees; while in *Aj.* 1192, death is described as the passing of the soul 'into the great aether or into the all-embracing Hades'.⁵ This idea of the correspondence of the aether to Hades⁶ is due to Orphic influence,⁷ and survived as a familiar idea in Christian theology. Though there may have long been a popular belief of this sort, the conception of Hades as a subterranean home of the dead was so firmly fixed in the minds of the Greeks that this passage in the *Ajax* is undoubtedly one of the first expressions in Greek literature of the conception that the souls of the dead pass to an abode in the sky. Such an idea might naturally arise in connection with cremation. From this idea, then, a pantheistic belief might eventually be developed: as the soul goes into the heavens, which represent the

¹ For Homeric concepts of the afterworld in Sophocles cf. Iwanowitsch *op. cit.* p. 78.

² This idea of the West as the abode of souls was suggested to the Greeks possibly by the natural association of death with the setting sun; cf. Farnell, *Gr. and Babylon* p. 205.

³ For the ether as the realm of the dead cf. A. Fairbanks *C.R.* XV. 431.

⁴ For the Gk. conception of the disembodied soul in the shape of a bee or a butterfly cf. J. G. Frazier, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, p. 29.

⁵ This passage is usually explained by *Tr.* 953 and *Ph.* 1092, which reproduce the familiar thought of someone's being snatched away by a whirlwind (cf. *Il.* 6. 345; *Od.* 1. 241f., 14, 371).

⁶ This idea occurs also in Euripides; cf. e.g. *Supp.* 1140, *Hel.* 1016, *ib.* 1219, fr. 971.

⁷ Cf. also *C.I.A.* 442.

home of the gods, the soul might be thought of as passing to a union or reunion with the gods (cf. *O.C.* 1475, where Zeus and the great ether are used as equivalent terms). This conception of the likeness between the human and the divine soul is a very important one in the study of ancient Greek religion.

The topography of the underworld is variously given in Sophocles.⁸ It is generally called Hades (*Aj.* 635, 660; *El.* 137, 834; *Ant.* 804, 810; *O.C.* 1563, 1662, 1726). But sometimes, in Homeric style, Hades is taken personally as the host of the dead (*Ant.* 810, 193), and the dead are said to inhabit the 'home of Hades' (*Aj.* 517; *Ant.* 1241; *Tr.* 120; *El.* 110). The description of this realm, where Sophocles follows the ordinary Greek mythology,⁹ appeals to the imagination rather than to the belief of the fifth century thinker. Sometimes, indeed, there is a blending of the traditional Hades with the idea of eternal quiet and peace for the dead (*O.C.* 1556ff.).¹⁰ In most cases, however, the familiar picture is unrelieved by any touch of this kind.

In projecting their ideas of conditions here on earth to their dim views of the afterworld, the Greeks thought of it as a secret (*O.C.* 1552), dark, and gloomy place (*Aj.* 387, 394, 571, 600, 608; *O.T.* 29f.; *Tr.* 501; *O.C.* 1390, 1559, 1563, 1681, fr. 523), full of lamentations (fr. 523). No such distinctions between Tartarus and Erebus (*Aj.* 397; *O.C.* 1389) is made in Sophocles, as in Homer. The nether plains (*ib.* 1563, 1577) lie near the shore of the Styx (*ib.* 1564; *El.* 138) or of the Acheron (*Ant.* 811f.; *El.* 184).¹¹ This shore of Hades (*ib.* 137f.) is *δυσκάθαρτος*, i.e. it is hard to purify, because new deaths ever occur.¹² It is also *πάγκουνος* (*ib.* 138); for all must pass through the gates of Hades (*O.C.* 1569f., *Aj.* 1192; *Ant.* 804, *ib.* 810). These

⁸ G. Jaffei (*Il. Mondo dei Morti nelle Tragedie di Sofocle*. Roma, 1905) says of Sophocles' representation of the underworld as compared with the treatment of it in Theognis, Aeschylus, and Pindar: "Sofocle ebbe una maggiore elevatezza di concepimento rispetto ai fenomeni ultra sensibili."

⁹ Cf. W. C. F. Anderson: "The underworld is for each age peopled with ghosts of discarded cults" (*Proceedings Cl. Assn.* 1914. p. 21). This traditional imagery is retained in Sophocles chiefly to give imaginative reality to the world of shades. So likewise in Virgil, Dante, Milton, Goethe, Etc.

¹⁰ Cf. Iwanowitzsch *op. cit.* p. 86f.

¹¹ Cf. also fr. 523 and Eur. fr. 868. It is noteworthy that no mention of Charon is found in the works of Sophocles.

¹² Such is the explanation of this epithet given in the Schneidewin-Nauck edition.

gates are guarded by the traditional form¹³ of the three-headed Cerebrus (*Tr.* 1098), the ἀνίκατος θήρ (*O.C.* 1568), the ἀδάματος φύλαξ who gnarls from the cavern's jaws (*ib.* 1571f.).

Yet, side by side with this mythological view of the underworld, is the expression of the popular belief that the souls are free and hover near their graves¹⁴ (*El.* 1066; *O.T.* 942); i.e. the idea seems to have been current that Hades and the grave are practically identical. Sophocles has his characters speak of the dead as *οἱ κάτω* (*Aj.* 865; *Ant.* 78) or *οἱ ὑπὸ χθονός* (*ib.* 65) or *οἱ ἐνερθε νεκροί* (*ib.* 25).¹⁵ Their home is 'beneath the earth' (*O.T.* 967; *Ant.* 65, 73; *El.* 1166, 1419; *O.C.* 1563, 1576, 1702; *Ph.* 416). The place of the dead is also vaguely referred to as *ἐκεῖ*¹⁶ (*El.* 356; *Ant.* 16; *Aj.* 855). Apparently libations were believed to pass beneath the earth to the locality of the dead (*Ant.* 197; cf. *El.* 431ff.). This chthonic conception of the dead runs all through Greek tragedy.¹⁷

¹³ Cf. *Il.* VIII. 368, *Od.* 623; *Hes. Th.* 311; *Eur. H.F.* 24f., *Alc.* 360; M. Bloomfield, *Cereberus, the DOG of Hades* (Chicago Open Court Pub. Co., 1905).

¹⁴ Cf. *Eur. I.T.* 139ff.

¹⁵ Cf. *Aes. Cho.* 353; *Eur. Med.* 1073, *Hel.* 1441, *Heracl.* 594, *Hec.* 422.

¹⁶ This is a common euphemism; cf. *Aes. Supp.* 230, *Cho.* 355; *Eur. Alc.* 744, *Med.* 1073; *Ar. Ran.* 82; *Pl. Phaedo* 64a, *Rep.* 427b, etc.

¹⁷ The whole course of the action in the *Oedipus Coloneus* centers around the question of the possession of the hero's tomb; while the whole of the *Antigone* and the last part of the *Ajax* deal almost entirely with the question of burial. In the *Eur. Hecuba* the tomb of Achilles is likewise an important factor in the drama. For the theory that tragedy arose through the cult of the tomb of heroes, cf. Ridgeway (*Orig. of Trag.*).

XIII. DEIFIED ABSTRACTIONS AND OTHER PERSONIFICATIONS

The deified abstractions Themis, Dike, and Ara, really chthonic in nature, and so belong to the underworld. Such personifications of abstract concepts and forces are a religious phenomenon of universal occurrence; for the human mind commonly tends to personify unseen powers and vividly felt ideas. Sometimes they are even deified and become the object of distinct cults. This tendency to personify and to deify abstractions was a fundamental element of Greek mythology and an important factor in Greek religion.¹ Such personifications are not always mere poetic figures of style.² We are, perhaps, too much under the influence of the statement of Herodotus (II. 53) that the gods of the Greeks were only the anthropomorphic divinities of Homer and Hesiod. All people Anthropomorphize their gods in some measure; and the Greeks, with their vivid imagination, did so to a very large extent. In studying the passages referring to Aphrodite and Ares, we have noted that the Olympians lost much of their epic individuality in Greek drama. Conversely, many personified abstractions³ were for the ancients real deities: though, being more directly transparent in their significance and of a different stratum of deification, their individuality was never so strongly felt as that of those gods who were celebrated in saga and who possessed more varied functions.

¹ This tendency was fostered by the anthropomorphic imagination of poets and artists in Greece. Harrison (*Proleg.* p. 215), from the standpoint of a modern student of ancient religions, deplores this habit of the Greek mind: "There is nothing that so speedily blurs and effaces the real origin of things as this insistent Greek habit of impersonation."

² It is impossible to make a sharp distinction between personification and deification, so closely connected are the two provinces: cf. Wissowa, *Relig. u. Kult. der Römer*, p. 271ff., and Engelhard *De Personificationibus*, pp. 56-64. The rhetorical personifications of the poets are a puzzling phase of the question: cf. H. L. Axtel, *The Deification of Abstract Ideas in Roman Literature and Inscriptions*, p. 8.

³ In the chapter on fatalism we treat of the personified abstractions Moira, Tyche, etc. In Sophocles, as elsewhere in Greek literature, these ideas and forces of good and evil fate are often represented as personal agencies.

Thus Themis, conventional Right or heavenly Justice, though she has the semblance of a real goddess, possesses no clear individuality of her own, but denotes merely one function of the activities of Ge.⁴ In *El.* 1064 Sophocles calls her *οὐρανώτας*.⁵ This is the only mention of this vague divinity in the extant plays and fragments of our author.⁶

Like Themis, Ara also attained to deity of a certain rank. Strong emotions were conceived of as demonic and, objectively projected, they are often identified with some shadowy 'numen' of divine potentiality.⁷ Such, for instance, is the symbolic nature of Ara, who tends to be identified with the Erinyes and so may be regarded as a distinctly divine personality, rather than a mere personification. Sometimes she is mentioned independently (i.e. distinct from the Erinyes), as in *El.* 111, *O.T.* 417, *O.C.* 139, *Tr.* 1239). In the latter cases, indeed, there is little suggestion of divinity;⁸ but in the *Electra* passage the epithet *πότνια* is applied to her.

Dike,⁹ who has a more vivid form than either Themis or Ara, is one of the chthonic gods when viewed as the deity concerned with the rights of the dead. Thus Dike is the personified right of the dead to claim from the living the right of sepulture and other pious observances which devote the dead to the living. So this goddess is an avenger of spirits.¹⁰ In this character she 'dwells with the nether gods' together with Zeus, ordains the higher laws of right conduct toward the dead (*Ant.* 451). Moreover, as the associate of Zeus, she is said to share his throne under the sanction of

⁴ The abstract word became detached from the personal name Ge-Themis: cf. Aes. *P.V.* 209 and Farnell III. 12ff., 50-62. V. 440, 443. Themis is also related particularly to the cult of Zeus: cf. Pind. *Ol.* VIII. 28, Eur. *Med.* 160-169.

⁵ Jebb says regarding this reference to Themis: "There is a two-fold fitness in the mention of her here. She is the goddess of just counsel, enthroned beside Zeus (cf. Pind. *Ol.* 8: and her faithful daughters (The Seasons, cf. Pind. fr. 30) will bring the time of vengeance.

⁶ For the local cults of Themis cf. Gruppe p. 1080, n. 6. On the chryselephantine statue of Themis at Olympia, cf. Paus 5.17.1.

⁷ Cf. discussion of curses in chap. on prayer. For the cult of Ara at Athens cf. Hesych. s.v.

⁸ For the application of the epithet *demopous* to Ara. cf. Aes. *Sept.* 791.

⁹ For the cult of Dike cf. Demosth. XXV. 35; C.I.G. Sept 1, 95; Athenae, p. 546. This deified abstraction is quite prominent in Greek tragedy, being mentioned 24 times in Aeschylus, 14 times in Euripides, and 7 times in the tr. frs. adesp. Doubt as to the reality of this god is expressed, however, in Eur. fr. 506.

¹⁰ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 1417, 1433, 1527, 1554.

the eternal laws (*O.C.* 1381f.).¹¹ In *O.C.* 1381 the goddess is called *παλαιφάτις*, an epithet sometimes applied to oracles (e.g. *Tr.* 823), and here used of deified Justice of a father's natural right, as opposed to the conventional claim of the elder brother or his plea for mercy as the suppliant of Poseidon. As a deification of the higher law Dike is mentioned also in *Ant.* 854. She follows up the guilty (*El.* 477), holding the power of righteousness in her hands (*ib.* 476).¹² Here the goddess is conceived as being in her person the victorious avenger.¹³ In this allegorical character Dike appears also in *Aj.* 139; *O.T.* 274, 885; *El.* 287, 528; *Tr.* 807ff. The epithets *τελέσφορος* and *ποίνημος* (fr. 12; *Tr.* 808), likewise refers to this divine power of punishing the unjust. Dike is called *πρόπαντις* in *El.* 475, because of the dream she has sent as a presage of her own advent. In fr. 12 'the golden eye of Dike,' a proverbial phrase, is mentioned.¹⁴

Nike, too, is personified in Sophocles. When worshipped she usually appears thus as a special form of another divinity, such as Athena, Artemis, or Aphrodite. This deified abstraction meant Victory, not only in war (cf. *Ant.* 148), but in any contest (cf. *Ph.* 134). She was especially associated with Zeus,¹⁵ but in the latter passage (viz. *Ph.* 134) Nike is identified with Athena.¹⁶ The goddess is here called *μεγαλώνωμος*, because Victory is glorious. Moreover she comes *αντιχαρεῖσσα*, 'with responsive smile' (*ib.* 134).

Fama, a similiar cult figure,¹⁷ is referred to as 'the sweet-voiced daughter of Zeus' (*O.T.* 151), 'the immortal child of golden Hope'

¹¹ Dike appears as an associate of Zeus elsewhere; cf. e.g., Orphlymn LXII. As Gruppe (p. 1080 n. 3) says "Die Gerechtigkeit der Weltordnung wird symbolisch ausgedrückt durch das Verhältnis in das Zeus zu Dike gesetzt wird," cf. Farnell I. 174.

¹² Dike is often joined with the Erinyes in Aeschylus (cf. e.g. *Sept.* 646ff.), but not in Sophocles.

¹³ As a bloody avenger (cf. Eur. *Med.* 1390) Dike is something like the Chinese god Tao. As Vengeance she is hardly distinguished from Nemesis on coins, etc. Thus, as a sort of Nemesis, Dike is spoken of as the 'gate-warden of Hades (fr. Permen., Diels *F.V.S.* 114 v. 14). This secondary phase of the human herd-instinct of justice chrystralized into a supernatural Nemesis or vengeance incarnate is the aspect Dike assumes in her later appearances, particularly in the Orphic hymns; cf. Harrison, *Myth. and Mon. Anc. Athens* CXVIII, f. 39; Hartung, *Arch. Zeit* p. 263, taf. XIX.

¹⁴ Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 564, tr. fr. adesp. 421, Polyd. 23.10.3. Occasionally there is a variation of the expression, as in tr. fr. adesp. 485, 491, 499.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. Paus. 5.11.1.

¹⁶ For the cult of Athena-Nike cf. e.g. Eur. *Ion* 454ff., 1529, ar. *Lys.* 317, Paus. I. 42.4, and the other evidence cited by Gruppe p. 1066 n. 3.

¹⁷ For the cult of Fama cf. Aeschin. Or. I. 128, Hes. *Op.* 761f., Paus. I. 17.1.

(*ib.* 159), or, on the other hand, as a 'shadow flitting over the life of men' (cf. *O.T.* 500ff), or, as a dark force especially connected with the dead (cf. *Aj.* 826, cf. 998f.). In this last sense, this force receives the epithet *χθόνια* (*El.* 1066)¹⁸ Ελπίς, an abstraction which easily lends itself to personification, is said to be golden (*O.T.* 157), 'the nurse of mortals' (fr. 948), and the daughter of Zeus (*O.T.* 158), who is often deceptive (*Aj.* 470; *El.* 1435) and lures men to their ruin (*Ant.* 615ff.). Ήειθω, an important deified abstraction, is mentioned in fr. 865, where she is pictured as having a δεινὸν πρόσωπον.¹⁹ "γῆς,²⁰ too, is represented in striking form (*O.T.* 873), and evidently was the chief character of the lost play by this title.²¹ Another personification of this type, but one of far more importance in the study of Greek religion, is Αἰδώς.²² Like Dike (cf. *O.C.* 1382), this abstract divinity is spoken of as the associate of Zeus: ἀλλ' ἔστι γὰρ καὶ Ζηνὶ σύνθακος θρόνων / Αἰδώς ἐπ' ἔρνοις πᾶσι (*ib.* 1267f.).²³ For the chief god²⁴ of the Greeks was considered not only just, but compassionate.

Many references to the earth are mere personifications (cf. *Aj.* 596; *Ph.* 325; *O.T.* 22, 480, 879; *O.C.* 691, 619).²⁵ The plague that comes upon Thebes is also spoken of as a god (*O.T.* 27). The disease of Philoctetes (*Ph.* 693) as well as the last agony of Heracles (*Tr.* 837, 987),²⁶ are likewise personified. In the majority of such instances,

¹⁸ Jebb, however, remarks on this l.: "Here, I think, *fama* rather hovers on the verge of personification than is actually personified."

¹⁹ An archaic inscription regarding a shrine to Peitho has been found; cf. Gruppe p. 1073 n. 1, Pearson on fr. 865, *Bull corr. hell.*, 1882, p. 443. Isoc (P Antidos. 249) refers to the Peitho cult. On this cult at Pharsalus, cf. Farnell II, 731.

²⁰ Cf. Hes. *Th.* 163, Hdt. VIII. 77, Pind. *O.* XIII. 10

²¹ Cf. Pearson II, 291.

²² For this cult cf. *C.I.A.* 3.367; Paus. 3.20.10, l. 17.1; Hesych. s.v. Estath. on *Il.* 22.451.

²³ Rightly explained by Tournier (ed. *O.C.*, Paris, 1885) as "Le respect (du malheur), la pitie, ou plutot, la misericorde."

²⁴ I.e. the highest ethical conception of the god, not, of course, the mythological. Cf. chap. on Zeus.

²⁵ Personification of this kind do not necessarily bear the mark of a reflective period of imagination: rather, as Farnell says (V. 444), they are of quite primitive origin.

²⁶ Cf. also *El.* 485, where the very ax is imagined as feeling revengeful toward the murderer who made it the instrument of her husband's death. Such a personification would recall to an Athenian audience the solemn practice by which a formal trial at

where $\theta\epsilon\delta s$ is applied to an abstract idea or to an inanimate object, the personification is literary, rather than religious. Thus in a description of the blessings that followed the introduction of agriculture into Attica, we find mention of Feast ($\Delta\alpha\iota s$) as $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\iota\sigma\tau\eta^{27}$ $\theta\epsilon\omega\nu^{28}$

So, too, the personified Horkos (attendant of Zeus *O.C.* 1767), the deity who witnesses oaths and punishes perjury,²⁹ is to be regarded more as a literary than as a religious personification. Wisdom ($\Phi\sigma\eta\sigma\iota s$) (fr. 922) is a similiar literary deification of an abstract idea.

Time, also, was metaphorically given some attributes of divinity. Like Zeus and Helios, $\chi\rho\sigma\nu s$ is called $\delta\pi\acute{a}n\theta'\delta\rho\omega\nu$ (*O.T.* 1213, fr. 918, tr. fr. Adesp. 510). In fr. 301 still more extensive powers are conceived as belonging to this abstraction: $\chi\rho\sigma\nu s$, $\delta\pi\acute{a}n\theta'\delta\rho\omega\nu\dots\kappa\iota\l\pi\acute{a}n\theta'\acute{a}ko\nu w\nu\kappa\iota\l\pi\acute{a}n\theta'\acute{a}na\pi\tau\acute{n}\sigma\sigma\iota\l$. Occasionally time is represented as 'the discoverer and revealer of truth' (*O.T.* 614, 1213; *O.C.* 1454, fr. 918): but is sometimes represented as 'making all things faint and bringing them into oblivion' (fr. 954). Again Time is mentioned as the 'teacher of men' (*O.C.* 7), 'a vital being' (*T.r.* 1169), 'who begets the days and nights' (*O.C.* 618). Moreover Time overthrows some and uplifts others (*ib.* 1452ff.), and like the plague (cf. *O.T.* 27), is even called $\theta\epsilon\delta s$ (*El.* 179). This personified abstraction is facile ($\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha\rho\eta s\ ib.$). 'one who makes even a hard thing easy of attainment,' 'one who soothes difficulties and makes sorrows tolerable' (cf. *O.C.* 7, 437). Time is also called the $\pi\alpha\gamma\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\eta s$, 'with power over all mortal things, though not over the gods' (*O.C.* 697ff.).

But, aside from these abstract deities and vivid, transparent allegorical forms, the amount of personification in Greek dramas is not so extensive as one might expect.³⁰ The way in which the characters in Sophocles address the forms of nature shows the degree to which inanimate things were invested with life, though not with

the Prytaneum was held of inanimate objects that had been the instrument of death (Aeschin. 3.244, Demosth. 23.76).

²⁷ Pearson points out the apparent Homeric (cf. *Od.* IV. 420) and Hesiodic (cf. *Th.* 363) influence here.

²⁸ Cf. Gruppe p. 1068 n.1. This tendency became almost a stylistic mannerism in Euripides, cf. e.g., *Hel.* 560; *Pheon.* 506, 331, 782; *Or.* 214, 399; *Cycl.* 317; *La.* 392; *Ion.* 336; *H.F.* 557.

²⁹ Cf. Hes. *Th.* 231, *Op.* 803.

³⁰ Cf. Heuse, *Poet, Personifik, in gr. Dichtungen*, Leipzig. 1868, 182ff.

human personality.³¹ The hills, e.g., are addressed as sympathetic living powers. Still they are hills, not persons.³²

³¹ Cf. Hes. *Th.* 227. Gruppe (p. 1068) points out the fact that the theogonies had much to do with growth of these abstract deities. The conventional allegories of late origin never had real personality seriously accorded them, their meaning being usually quite transparent. They belong, as Bouche-Leclercq says (*Manuel des institutions romaines*, p. 493), to an “apotheosis grammaticale.” Yet the line between these and real religious personifications is often very fine, for many purely allegorical forms possessed altars and had a distinct cult. So, while most of the abstractions given personal and even divine attributes by Sophocles and other Greek poets are merely stylistic, yet many of them likewise belong to the study of religion; as Gruppe (*loc. cit.*) says “Weil aber die Poesie in Griechenland die Religion seit alter Zeit auf das nachhaltigste beeinflusst hat, sind auch diese personifizierten Abstrakta . . . schon früh sehr wichtig geworden.”

³² Max Mueller (*Comp. Myth.* II. 66) has made this point very clear; viz.—that the amount of direct personification in Gk. mythology is not so extensive as is sometimes claimed.

XIV. EXPRESSIONS OF FATALISM, NEMESIS, AND PESSIMISM

The question whether mankind is ruled by an all-powerful Destiny is frequently raised in Greek speculation by both poets and philosophers.¹ For them, as well as for all thinkers, this was a difficult and baffling problem.² The solution most commonly offered is perhaps (cf. e.g. *Tr.* 124ff.), the idea of a ruling force in a more or less personified form, a Zeus *μοιραγέτης* that directs the course of events. The treatment of this subject by Sophocles still remains a matter of dispute among students of comparative religion: some argue that the spirit of his plays is purely fatalistic,³ while others claim that in each case the course of the play is guided primarily by the will of the characters.⁴ Here, as elsewhere, we will set forth the evidence with as little comment as possible.

There is a great variety of terms in Greek that are commonly used to express the power and agents of fate:⁵ *μοῖρα, τύχη, δαίμων, ἀνάγκη, πότμος, κῆρ, θέμις, ἀλάστωρ, ἔρινος, ἄρα, νέμεσις.*⁶ All these forces are often personified and most of them are deified. They all have close relation to the power of Zeus or his representative Apollo. Occasionally, to be sure, Fate is spoken of as all-powerful, beyond the control of even the highest of the gods (e.g. fr. 524).⁷ But too much stress ought not to be laid on this fact, for in other passages

¹ For a brief survey of the treatment of the question of fatalism by Gk. writers before Sophocles, cf. J. H. Schlegel's *Die Trag. Ironie bei Soph.*, pp. 27-34. Within the domain of practical ethics the idea of fatalism as a principle of conduct scarcely existed for the ordinary Greek; cf. Farnell I. 82. So this study of fatalism is really more important for philosophy than for Greek religion. cf. *ib.* V. 478f.

² The prominence of fate in tragedy is humorously alluded to by Socrates in Pl. *Phaedo* 115a.

³ E.g., J. Rasch in *comment. Phil. Jenen.* V, 1911, p. 19; Wilamowitz, ed. of *Tr.* u. on l. 14.

⁴ E.g., Welcker, *K.L. Schr.* 11. 288.

⁵ Cf. St. George Stock in Hastings V. 786.

⁶ There is no sharp distinction between *Ara* and *Erinys*; the tragedians often use these words interchangeably (e.g. *El.* 491, *Tr.* 1239; Aes. *Eum.* 417, 420, *Sept.* 945). The cults of both the *Arai* and the *Erinyes* were quite important.

⁷ Lucian's *Zeus Tragodos* presents this antinomy in a humorous form.

the power of Zeus is represented as omnipotent (e.g. frs. 273, 275, 320). The riddle of this contradiction can never be definitely settled, except perhaps as in fr. 1129, where the decrees of destiny exactly correspond with the will of Zeus, or as in *Ph.* 1466, where the power of fate, though separately expressed, is identified with that of God.⁸ Here, as in some other passages in Sophocles, the idea prevails to a large extent that divine foresight has ordained mortal life according to a fixed plan.⁹ The divine intervention in the fate of mortals is sometimes only indicated, as in the case of Heracles in the *Trachiniae*; often however, as in the case of Ajax and Philoctetes, the divine agency is more definitely and directly expressed.

Μοῖρα, the most common term for fate, is slightly personified in *O.C.* 1221ff., 1450; *O.T.* 713, 886, 1458; *Aj.* 516; *Ph.* 681; *Tr.* 850; fr. 529. Often this term is used just as a synonym for ‘death’ (e.g. *O.C.* 1450, *Aj.* 563). In *O.T.* 863 *μοῖρα*, in the sense of ‘lot’ is not especially personal, except to the extent that the verb *ξυνεῖν* (‘be with’) is tinged with a suggestion of *ξυνεδεῖν* (‘be witness to’). In literature, as in cult, *Μοῖρα* or the *Μοῖραι* undoubtedly attain to deity.¹⁰ Thus we find in Sophocles such vivid expressions as *ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα χώ πανδαμάτωρ δαίμων*¹¹ (*Ph.* 1466ff.) and *Μοῖραι μακραῖωνες* (*Ant.* 986f.). Moreover *Μοῖρα* is said to overtake her victim (*O.C.* 1450) and is said to hold him (*El.* 1414, *Ph.* 331; *Ant.* 987).¹²

Likewise, the abstraction *τύχη* is frequently personified and occasionally deified in Greek literature. Generally, however, the term is used abstractly to designate merely one’s fortune or lot (e.g. *Aj.* 283, 1028). It represents the incalculable element in human life, a force working for either the good or harm of men. As such, *τύχη* is often regarded as something sent from heaven (e.g. *O.C.* 1505, 1595, fr. 169).¹³ This conception of fate is not re-

⁸ In plastic art the ancients often represented Zeus and the *Moirai* hand in hand; cf. Stephanī, *Compte rendu*, 1881, V. 18, p. 118f.

⁹ This idea is prominent also in Aeschylus, cf. e.g. 365.

¹⁰ For the worship of the *Moirai* at Athens cf. C.I.A. 3. 357, C.I.A. 2. 1662. Their cult at Sparta was an ancient one: cf. Paus. 3.11.10. They seem to have originated as unpretentious birth daimones, not as personified forces of an omnipotent fate; cf. Farnell I. 82, V. 447.

¹¹ The Schneidervin-Nauck and some other editions have *moira* as in l. 331.

¹² Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 612, Mimnerm. fr. 6 Solon fr. 22, Simon. fr. 91.

¹³ Pearson (n. on fr. 709) says that the idea of fortune as a deity of uncertain chance as opposed to definite foresight is comparatively late, and that the Sophoclean passages *O.T.* 977 and *Ant.* 1198, together with the fragmentary references in Pindar

garded as a rival of Zeus,¹⁴ nor does it necessarily imply a denial of the power of the gods; it seems rather to denote a mode of action on the part of heaven (cf. *Ph.* 546, 1196, 1316). This idea of fortune is not that of a capricious force or blind chance, but simply that idea of luck or accident which has been universally recognized throughout the ages. It is a cosmic force in the regular order of events.¹⁵ Not only the suffering of Philoctetes, but also the death of Heracles (cf. *Tr.* 724) and of Oedipus (cf. *O.C.* 1585), comes *θειᾳ τύχῃ*.—‘with which no mortal can strive’ (fr. 196). So, too, Creon becomes king *θεῶν ἐπὶ συντυχίαις* (*Ant.* 158). *Tύχη* is used occasionally to denote ‘inevitable mischance’ (*El.* 48).¹⁶ Likewise in *O.T.* 263, *O.C.* 1404, *Aj.* 323, and *Tr.* 327,¹⁷ it signifies ‘calamity.’ Sometimes this force is represented as seizing its victim (*O.C.* 1026, *O.T.* 263) and destroying him (*ib.* 442). Furthermore, by poetic personification, chance is said to be the power that decides about the discovery of the one who has defied the proclamation (*Ant.* 328). In *O.T.* 977 we see a similar personification of chance as the supernatural force that controls human affairs. When deified in this character, *τύχη* appears as the name of the goddess of Luck (cf. frs. 709, 809).¹⁸ Thus in the words *έγώ δ' ἔμαντὸν παῖδα τῆς Τύχης νέμων / τῆς εὖ διδούσης* (*O.T.* 1080f.), Oedipus declares that he himself is the son of Good Luck.¹⁹ Likewise in frs. 374 and 841, Luck appears to be represented as a kindly disposed deity. So too in fr. 14, l. 73,

are insufficient to prove that Sophocles would have addressed Tyche as capricious and uncertain. But Shorey (*Cl. Phil.* XIII, 1917, p. 98) argues that such a conception can hardly be denied this poet, in view of the fact that it occurs in Pind. *Ol.* 12.

¹⁴ Paus. (9.16.2) speaks of a statue, by Cephisodotus, of Zeus as god of fate.

¹⁵ Cf. W. Fowler, *Roman Ideas of Deity*, p. 62, the use of the word *theos* or *deus* to explain sudden chances, providential escapes, etc.,—which cannot fully account for by science,—may well be at the root of the great influence ascribed to Tyche or Fortuna. Thus Polybius, in attempting to discover the factors that led to the degeneration and depopulation of Greece, uses the term *Tyche* as the divine agency.

¹⁶ Meuss (*Tyche bei den att. Trag.*, Herchb., 1899) has taken great pains to distinguish the use of Tyche as mere chance and as a divinity. As the goddess of luck, Tyche became a popular state divinity only in Hellenistic and Roman times, due probably to the prevalent recognition of the sister-figure Fortuna (cf. Farnell V. 447).

¹⁷ In Gk. comedy, Tyche, like many orthodox divinities, was frequently used as prologue speaker, cf. C. H. Moore, *Cl. Phil.* II. 1ff.

¹⁸ Cf. Pind. fr. 41, where Tyche is said to be the mightiest of the fates.

¹⁹ For the cult of Tyche cf. Farnell V. 447.

where we find a prayer to Τύχη and δαίμων Ιθυντήριος.²⁰ Τύχη is here invoked as the divine power to which all human actions are subservient, rather than as the goddess of blind chance. She appears in the latter guise (i.e. as a fortuitous power, opposed to design or foresight) in *O.T.* 977, and *Ant.* 1158.

Many other conceptions of fate are found in these plays. In fr. 575, e.g., fate is spoken of as a wheel of fortune. Likewise, in fr. 871f., fate is represented as ‘whirling on the wheel of god’.²¹ In *Tr.* 127f. and *El.* 916ff., this frequent change of fortune sent by heaven is spoken of as a consolation in times of hardship. Furthermore, in *Tr.* 850, the coming fate is said to foreshadow a great hidden trouble. Here and in *O.C.* 525, ἄτη signifies misfortune. This word in Sophocles²² means usually, not so much infatuation (though that sense of the word is found, e.g. *Ant.* 623), as the calamity that is the consequence of infatuation (e.g. *Aj.* 307). In *O.C.* 93 this word is clearly used to express the opposite of κέρδος (cf. also *Aj.* 363, 908, 923; *El.* 1260 and fr. 593.—where we find the expression in plural form, denoting, ‘wily mischiefs of calamity’).²³ Occasionally Sophocles applies the word ἄτη to persons, as in *Ant.* 533, *O.C.* 532; while in *O.T.* 165 the Sphinx is thus designated. Sometimes the term is used, as in Homer, to express a personification of the idea *quem deus vult perdere prius dementat* (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 622ff., *Aj.* 910).²⁴

Another expression of evil fate that is hard to translate in certain instances is κῆρ.²⁵ It is used impersonally as ‘unhappy lot’ in *Ph.* 1166, where the chorus is urging the hero not to remain behind at

²⁰ The latter is a vague term that appears to refer, not to Apollo, but to another aspect of Tyche,—‘Chance that guides the actions of mortals.’ Pearson calls attention to the fact that the worship of *agathos* daimon was intimately associated with that of *agathe tyche* cf. Frazer’s Paus. 9.39.5.

²¹ These passages remind us of the Orphic-Pythagorean theories of a circle in human affairs cf. Orph. fr. 226, Diog. l. 8.14, Harrison *Proleg.* 5895, Cornford *From Relig to Phil.* 165ff.

²² In Aeschylus the word *ate* usually signifies a curious interfusion of fate and guilt: cf. e.g. *Pers.* 97.

²³ Pearson thinks that the Homeric epithet applied to the shows that they are half-personified, as ‘suptle tempters of men’s minds.’ Cf. similar half-personifications of the *atai* in Aes. *Ag.* 397, 765, and *Cho.* 465.

²⁴ This idea, so frequent in tragedy, is repeated with burlesque solemnity in comedy; cf. Kock’s *Com. Fragments*. Thus in Pap. gr. e lat. Soc. Ital. (SSI. 26. 70) we find a fr., possibly from one of Menander’s plays, where the statement is made: ‘God implants blind guilt in mortals whenever he is fain utterly to destroy a household.’

²⁵ This is a common word for death or doom in Homer (e.g. *Il.* I. 228.

Lemnus to face certain destruction. In like manner the word is used *ib.* 42, where Odysseus, speaking of the festering sore of Philoctetes, says that the hero is *νοσῶν κῶλον παλαιὰ κηρί*.²⁶ More difficult of analysis is the use of the word in *Tr.* 454, where Deianira says: *ἔλευθέρω / ψευδεῖ καλεῖσθαι κῆρ πρόσεστιν οὐ καλή*. Here the word signifies a base or disgraceful thing. In *O.T.* 471ff. the personification is clear; ‘there is no escaping the δειναὶ κῆρες,²⁷ ‘who pursue and overtake the impious in spite of speed of foot or of soil.’ Moreover in *Tr.* 133 we find an implicit reference to the might of the κῆρες. These κῆρες here appear to be not very different from the *Μοῖραι*, though expressing perhaps less authority as executors of the divine will.²⁸

'Ανάγκη is another term for fate that occurs, in *Ant.* 1106 e.g., where we are told *ἀνάγκη δ’οὐχὶ δυσμαχητέον*. Furthermore, we see that in the *Trachiniae* Heracles gives up all hope of recovery when he realizes that he is in the grip of this divine force. At first he believed himself to be a victim of human malice, terrible though not definite; but later he knows that his death is at hand when he sees that inevitable ἀνάγκη is concerned with the turn of events (cf. l. 1143ff.). The chorus also declares the impossibility of escaping δολοποιὸς ἀνάγκη (*ib.* 958).

Fate is also occasionally called πότμος. Thus Creon speaks of the fate that has swooped down upon his head (*Ant.* 1435). Likewise the chorus cry to Philoctetes: πότμος, πότμος . . . δαίμονων brought you into my power (*Ph.* 1117ff.).

Δαίμων, which is often thus associated with πότμος, is used to represent both destiny and divine spirit; the line between the two meanings is sometimes hard to determine. The term δαίμων is used to denote an unseen supernatural agent in *Ant.* 246, *O.T.* 1258, fr. 646; while in *O.C.* 76, *ib.* 1337, *Ant.* 534, *Ph.* 1100 and fr. 656 it represents fate or destiny and, as such, is contrasted with θέος in

²⁶ Harrison (*Proleg.* 171) capitalizes the word in this passage and says that the usage here is primitive rather than poetical.

²⁷ For a discussion of the nature of the Keres cf. *ib.* 165ff., O. Crusius in Roscher II. 1148. As goddess of death the Keres are mentioned in *Il.* II. 234, *Od.* XI, 171; while in Hes. *Th.* 217ff., they appear as avenging deities. In *Sept.* 1055 Aeschylus joins *Keres Erinyes*. Like *ate*, the *Keres* bring only death or evil fate: whereas *Aisa* and *Moirai* may bring blessing as well as doom.

²⁸ In Hes. *Th.* 215f. the *Keres* are mentioned in close connection with the *Moirai*.

fr. 555.²⁹ Moreover life and death are said to be in the power of this force or divine being (*O.C.* 1370).³⁰ The meaning of this word *δαιμων* is further illustrated by the following passages: *Aj.* 504, *Ant.* 832, *Ph.* 1086, *O.C.* 1370, *ib.* 1749f. Sometimes, as in *El.* 1306, it is used like *κατρός* (*Ph.* 837) to express the particular destiny attending a critical moment. So in their dire distress Oedipus (*O.T.* 1311, *O.C.* 1480), Heracles (*Tr.* 1026), and Philoctetes, (*Ph.* 1086) all call upon *δαιμων*. Occasionally this word is specialized to signify an evil fate as in *Aj.* 504.³⁰ Finally, we may note that in *El.* 999 the word is used in a colorless abstract way as 'fortune'.³¹

Furthermore there is frequent reference in Sophocles to the inevitableness of fate (cf. e.g. *Ph.* 1316). Indeed, such a gnome as 'One should not struggle with fate' (*Ant.* 1106) might be taken as the keynote of Greek tragedy. Similar sentiments appear in *Aj.* 186, 256; *O.T.* 492, *Ant.* 951f.; *O.C.* 191; *Ph.* 192, 199, 1039, 1310f., 1421f.; frs. 196, 258, 585, 611, 680, 757, 961, 964.³² The theme is varied in fr. 259 and *Ant.* 952 by the introduction of Ares, who, though the embodiment of physical strength, nevertheless must yield to fate. The fixity of divine decrees is maintained also in the closing scene of the *Oedipus Coloneus* and of the *Antigone*.

This terrible power of fate (cf. *Ant.* 951—ἀ μοιριδία της δύναμις δεινά), even when it seemingly works from without, can in many cases be traced to some ancestral guilt.³³ Oedipus, Antigone, and the other Labdacidae are, according to tradition, represented as being more or less victims of the hereditary curse (cf. *Ant.* 2ff., 598, 856, 951f.; *O.C.* 585, 598, 1298ff., 1672). Oedipus disclaims all guilt (*ib.* 964ff.): the doom was impending over his race, and he

²⁹ We accept the MSS. Pearson (cf. his n. on this fr.) adopts *iθne-ton*, the sug. of F. W. Schmidt. The word *daimones* may, indeed, designate a lower order of beings as contrasted with the gods. Cf. *Aes. Sept.* 510, *Eur. Med.* 1391.

³⁰ Cf. chap. on Monotheism. The Greek Daimon is often identical in character with the Egyptian deity Shay; cf. A. H. Gardner in *Hastings IX.* 790.

³¹ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 1174; *Il.* VIII. 166. Where evil fate is not meant, *agathos* is usually explicitly stated, as Gerhard shows in *Koenigliche Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 47, 416ff.

³² Cf. St. George Stock in *Hastings V.* 790. This idea of the futility of resistance to fate is especially prominent in Aeschylus. Cf. also *Eur.* frs. 397, 490, *Or.* 797; *Pind. Pyth.* XII. 52; *Od.* IV. 237, XIV. 445.

³³ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 15ff., *Supp.* 732f., *Cho.* 382ff., 646ff., *Eur.* frs. 86, 836, *Bacch.* 882ff. This theme is discussed by Naegelsbach p. 28ff. and by C. R. Post in *Harv. Stud.* XXIII. 102.

was but the instrument thereof (cf. *ib.* 998). Throughout the second stasimon of the *Antigone* (ll. 584-625) this same thought is dwelt upon: 'The house of the Labdacidae is under divine judgment for some sin committed by a member of this race: there is no deliverance from such a curse: human power cannot defy the might of Zeus: blessed is the house that has no taint of sin; when guilt is once incurred the malignity of the curse fails nevermore, passing from life to life of the race.' This idea of the transmission from generation to generation of a sin committed by some ancestor is present also in the *Electra* (cf. 628, 1136, 1497).

On the other hand, while Ajax, Clytemnestra, Deianira, and other characters are, at times, represented as being impelled by fate, it may nevertheless be surmised that they become involved in ruin through some initiative of their own; at least it appears that within the ordinary course of events a great deal of option was open to them.³⁴ Much has been written about Antigone's defiance of the civic law, of Oedipus' ill-considered resentment of injury,³⁵ of Deianira's lack of caution in using the gift of an enemy, and of the impetuous arrogance of Ajax.³⁶ The catastrophe in these instances can, to some extent, be traced to certain elements in the personality,—innate predispositions, as scientists would say.³⁷ In the case of Philoctetes e.g., the long-continued injustice toward him and his great suffering has aroused in the hero a deep bitterness (cf. e.g. *Ph.* 275, 315f.), which at first moves him even to refuse obedience to the express dictates of heaven (cf. 1321ff., 1387). This resentfulness, which is potentially innate in him, appears to be the chief motive in his attitude toward the Greek chiefs.³⁸ In the case of Polyneices, too, we see that, although he laments his evil fate (*O.C.* 1433f.), he nevertheless rejects the possibility of avoiding the fatal encounter with his brother; he wills to go, so his doom is sealed by his own decision. Creon, in like manner, has warning of the dire results of his own actions (*Ant.* 992ff.); even the neutral chorus say that the

³⁴ Cf. Schneidewin, introd. ed. *El.* init.

³⁵ Note also the furious anger displayed by Oedipus even in his old age (e.g. *O.C.* 804f., 852ff., 954, 966, 1192); cf. J. Hookaas, *De Soph. O.C.*, III. 13f.

³⁶ Cf. Jebb, Introd. ed. *Ajax*.

³⁷ Welker (*Kl. Schr.* II. 288) argues that the statement of the seer (*Aj.* 788f., 800f.) is a proof that the hero's ruin lay in his impetuous character, and that his death was the voluntary deed of his own proud spirit.

³⁸ Post (*Harv. Stud.* XVIII, 103), thinks that Sophocles is too much of a psychologist ever to allow the denouement of any play to depend entirely upon fate.

catastrophe is the result of his misdeeds (*ib.* 1259f., 1270).³⁹ But he will not desist from his purpose, and it is to his sinful mind that Ismene in the *Antigone* attributes part at least of the trouble in which he became embroiled (cf. *O.C.* 371). Ismene herself is warned by her sister to guide her own fate aright (*Ant.* 83). The calamity that overwhelms her brother is not represented as being absolutely inevitable, but is due partly, at least, to individual error. Another example of this belief in human initiative is to be found in fr. 843, where the speaker states his willingness to do everything possible in directing his own course of life: ‘what is to be taught, I learn: what is to be found, I seek: ‘what is to be prayed for, I pray for.’⁴⁰ Finally, in fr. 407, we find the familiar thought that fortune helps only those who help themselves: *οὐκ ἔστι τοῖς μὴ δρῶσι σύμμαχος τύχη*.⁴¹

We see, then, that while fate is often spoken of as a fixed term, not to be disturbed by individual effort or by mere chance (e.g. frs. 686, 953), nevertheless in many passages the gods are represented, not as appointing an inevitable fate for mortals, but as merely speeding them in the direction voluntarily chosen. Thus the limitation of human life does not appear to be absolutely determined: for Antigone dies before her fate (*πρὶν μοῖραν*—*Ant.* 896).⁴² Such an expression points to a distinction between that which is predestined by the natural course of things and that which is definitely brought about by human initiative in the way of self-sacrifice or murder. For this reason suicide is regarded as more awful than ordinary death (cf. *Aj.* 257ff., *O.T.* 1224ff., *Tr.* 899ff.), as the survivors do not have the consolation of recognizing such an end as an inevitable destiny. Suicide was looked upon by the Gks. as a sin against heaven or at least as an injury to the state. The existence of such an opinion is implied in the effort of Plato, *Phaedo* 61d-62e, and of Aristotle, *Eth Nicom.* V. 15, to explain the theory of this sin.

No one who has studied the works of Sophocles as a whole can doubt the interest of the poet in this eternal problem of fate and human suffering. The question as to the cause and purpose of suffering is naturally a matter of deep concern to every serious thinker, particularly so to a writer of tragedy, and the peculiar

³⁹ One might argue, of course, that innate elements of character are ultimately determined by fate.

⁴⁰ Cf. Eur. fr. 432, *Hel.* 756.

⁴¹ Cf. Aes. *Pers.*; Eur. fr. 402, *I.T.* 910, *El.* 80, *Hel.* 156.

⁴² Such an expression is not uncommon in Greek literature: Cf. e.g. *Od.* I. 34.

religious character of the Greek drama appears in the way in which this subject is here treated. In life the innocent often suffer, while the guilty seem to prosper. Likewise in the plays of Sophocles there are some cases where those who are apparently innocent of personal guilt are overwhelmed with misfortune, while an utterly unscrupulous man, like Odysseus in the *Philoctetes* appears to enjoy unbroken prosperity (cf. ll. 430, 448ff.). Yet the beginning of evil is nearly always represented as someone's sin (actual evil-doing, not mere error), and this initial guilt becomes the common cause of suffering.

Nemesis, therefore, is what Sophocles emphasizes.⁴³ Thus one of the common causes of misfortune is shown to be overweening insolence, which arouses divine nemesis. Poor Ajax is drawn into evil snares (*Aj.* 60) because of his insolence to the gods (*ib.* 761ff., 771ff.).⁴⁴ The chorus are afraid of nemesis and warn their hero against speaking an ἔπος μέγα (*ib.* 386). Likewise in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* the chorus stands aghast at the impious words of Oedipus and Jocasta, and express impatience and bewilderment at the long delay of the triumph of righteousness and the punishment of presumption (883-910). That presumptuous boasting is heavily punished by heaven was a commonplace among the Greeks (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 127ff., 1350f.: *El.* 569, 830). The theory of retribution for such arrogance is undoubtedly declared in *Aj.* 756ff. 'Mortals should have mortal thoughts' (*Aj.* 760f., frs. 346, 590, 662). 'The gods hate insolence' (*Tr.* 280; cf. *ib.* 281f.). 'Divine vengeance, though it tarry long, will finally overtake the wicked' (*El.* 1013, *Ph.* 1041, *O.C.* 1370). One of the most emphatic expressions of this thought is found in *O.C.* 1536f: θεοὶ γὰρ εὖ μέν, δύὲ δ' εἰσορῶσι, δταν / τὰ θεῖ' ἀφεῖς εἰς τὸ μαίνεσθαι τραπῆ.⁴⁵ In the *Philoctetes*, also, the chorus believe that the gods requite evil deeds and so they shun the nemesis that would come if they should abandon the suffering and defenseless hero (517f.). Philoctetes himself firmly believes in divine retribution (*ib.* 1037ff.).⁴⁶ Likewise in the *Antigone* there is a reference to

⁴³ Nemesis is sometimes deified as a goddess of the underworld: cf. Hesych. s.v. It may be worth mentioning here that Adrastia, another personification of fate (cf. Aes. *P.V.* 936; Eur. *Rhes.* 342, 436), is not referred to by Sophocles.

⁴⁴ This is possibly a reference to the daring outrage on religion at Athens in 415 B.C., and to the public disaster that followed (thuc. VI. cc. 26-29, 60, 61).

⁴⁵ Here the qualification is put first as a pius concession.

⁴⁶ The idea of reciprocity of fate is involved in the death of Ajax (*Aj.* 1020ff., 11. rejected by Nauck) and of Heracles (*Tr.* 441ff.).

the nemesis of the gods; it is believed that they are angry because of the attack upon the land they care for and upon their shrines (282ff.). Moreover, in the *Electra* we find Aegisthus taking precautions against incurring divine nemesis (1467). The death of one in his youth and strength seems to him an instance of the envy of the gods, then, shrinking from the boldness of voicing such a thought, he adds,—‘If nemesis awaits the expression, I withdraw the words.’ Reference is made also to the vengeance of heaven visited upon Agamemnon (*ib.* 653ff.). As a punishment for what? According to the Sophoclean version of the story, the hero had not deliberately gone to the precinct to hunt,—that would have been a gross offence;—but, while walking there, he accidentally startled a stag and, giving way to a sportsman’s impulse, shot the animal and uttered a boastful word. The retribution for this was all out of proportion to the offense. But where personal guilt could not account for punishment, there was always, as we have said, the idea of an inherited sin.

Such a curse⁴⁷ is inherited by the Thebans from their king Laius and from his son. The citizens themselves are innocent of any active or conscious participation in the pollution. Yet the affliction sent upon them is a heavy one; the sphinx also had been sent against them (*ib.* 36, 391, 508), and the plague affects the fertility of women, flocks and fields (*O.T.* 26, 172ff.). Dread of such punishment checks the natural feelings of hospitality and of pity in the chorus in *O.C.* 253ff.; for all unseemly words or deeds might arouse the anger of the gods.

As to Antigone’s suffering,—though the gods allow her to die, it does not follow that they are represented as approving of her condemnation (cf. e.g. *Ant.* 926). The chorus, indeed, though praising her piety, nevertheless regards her collision with the city’s law as an act of frantic folly (*ib.* 855, 603) and say that she has left Creon no choice but to punish her. Yet Creon is certainly guilty of harshness toward the girl and of impiety toward gods and men. Though his act is legally⁴⁸ correct, the edict is tyrannical.⁴⁹ He realizes this

⁴⁷ Curses are a religious concept and so the idea of an inherited curse upon a family,—a blight transmitted from generation to generation,—belongs to the sphere of religion. For the distinction between the magical and the ‘religious’ curse or blessing becomes an appeal to a god are rather indistinct. Just as the Gk. word *ara* may denote either a curse or a prayer, so likewise the Manx word *givee*. (Cf. Rhys, *Celtic Folklore* I. 349).

⁴⁸ Cf. Hirzel, *Abh. d. Sachs. Ges. Wiss. Phil. Hist. Kl.* XX. 66.

⁴⁹ Cf. Goethe *Gesp. mit Eck.* 28 III. 27.2, *Philol.* LXII. 1ff.

too late and is crushed under the retribution that follows. Thus he learns wisdom through suffering: ἐγώ μαθὼν δεῖλαος (*ib.* 1272). Similar references to suffering as merited punishment are found in *ib.* 927, frs. 229, 373. The idea⁵⁰ is expressed in fr. 962 thus: τὸν δρῶντα γάρ τι καὶ παθέν δφείλεται.

Furthermore in *O.T.* 443, when Oedipus is told that his solving of the riddle of the sphinx has led to his ruin, he takes a very unselfish attitude toward misfortune saying: ἀλλ' εἰ πόλων τήδ' ἔξεσωσ', οὐ μοι μέλει. He might be said to be consecrated thus to suffering (*O.C.* 100). As a compensation for this he acquires faith in the gods (*O.T.* 1445) and sanctification at death (*O.C.* 1565). Heracles, in like manner, is glorified after suffering (*ib.* 1428ff.), though no direct mention of his apotheosis is made in the *Trachiniae*. Philoctetes also suffers by the will of the gods (*Ph.* 199, 421) and he, too, is rewarded in the end (*ib.* 720, 1421ff.). The purpose of the suffering of his wife Dieanira, whose fate surpasses in pathos that of any other character in Sophocles, is rather mysterious. Possibly her action may be regarded as simply subsidiary to the fulfillment of the fate of Heracles. There are several other references in Sophocles to suffering as a discipline (e.g. *O.C.* 804f., 666f., *El.* 1465). Theseus has learned sympathy from hard experience in exile. (*O.C.* 562ff.). Ajax, too, learns the lessons of adversity (*Aj.* 668ff.).

Closely allied to these problems of fate and suffering, is that of pessimism. Quite frequently we find expressions of wonder and awe at the incalculable element in human fortunes,—the force that cannot be reckoned on, outside and beyond the reach of any human effort. On the occasions of such reflection the characters seem overwhelmed with a feeling of the weakness of man and the futility of endeavor. Tragedy, indeed, is in its very essence a representation of the frustration and failure of men's efforts and essential desires. It is not surprising, then, to find in Sophocles frequent expression of the more forbidding aspects of life. The tone of the closing lines of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is of this character. This whole drama, in fact, is an illustration of the helplessness of man in coping with the power of the unseen. Emphasis is repeatedly laid upon the contrast of the previous prosperity of Oedipus and

⁵⁰ This doctrine is likewise frequently referred to by both Aeschylus and Euripides. Nitch, Sagen Poesie p. 531, School, *Grundlicher Unterricht über d. Tetralogie d. Att. Theaters*, p. 217; Vetter, *Ueber die Schuld-frage in König Oed.*, Kendall, *The Sin of Oedipus*, C.R. XXV, 1911, 193ff; J. Hookaas, *De Soph. Oed. Col.* IV. 19ff.

his later shame and ruin (1196ff., 1282ff., 1297ff., 1360ff., 1369ff.). Thus we are told in 1186ff.: *ἴώ γενεαὶ βροτῶν, / ὡς ὑμᾶς ἦσα καὶ τὸ μηδέν
ξώσας ἐναριθμῶ. / τίς γάρ, τίς ἀνὴρ πλέον / τὰς εὐδαιμονίας φέρει / ή
τοσοῦντον ὅσον δοκεῖν/καὶ δόξαντ' ἀποκλῖναι;*

More forcibly, perhaps, than any of the other dramas does the *Trachiniae* portray the sadness of life.⁵¹ From the opening lines to the cynical accusation of Zeus at the close, the ground-tone of the entire drama is one of disappointment, of wrong, of suffering, and of death. Our pity for the unhappy heroine, for her rival (the silent captive girl), and for Heracles himself, (who is killed at the hour when he hopes at last he can rest from his labors),—for all of these, our pity is continually stirred. A number of passages in the other plays of Sophocles express the pessimistic view of life more beautifully, but no other one more significantly or poignantly portrays the wretched ending of human hopes in misery and despair (cf. e.g. *Tr.* 144ff., 721, 947ff., 1148f., 1172f., 1236f.).⁵²

The story of Ajax further illustrates the truth that honor and good fortune rest on no secure basis (cf. *Aj.* 125f., 129ff., 363ff., 393, 432ff., 455f., 473, 502ff., 550, 553, 612ff., 646ff., 677ff., 992ff., 1266ff., 1255, 1418ff.). In ll. 125f.,—*ὅρῶ γάρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο
πληγῆ / εἰδῶλ’ ὄσοιπερ ζῶμεν ή κούφην σκιάν*,—the unsubstantial nature of things and the uncertain tenure of life are well expressed. Very much same thought is suggested by the use of the Homeric word *ἄμεριοι* for men, who are, we are told but ‘creatures of a day’ (*ib.* 399, *Ant.* 790, *Aj.* 399). Likewise it is said that not even friendship is to be regarded as permanent (l. 133; cf. *O.C.* 614), and that happiness is only for the ignorant (l. 546ff.; cf. *Ant.* 610ff.). The condition in which the hero finds himself is such that he despairs of ever being cleared of disgrace and he therefore seeks death as the only possible solution (390, 692, 854). But the dead are quickly forgotten. Alas for the dead! (1266f.).

Antigone, too, welcomes death (*Ant.* 462ff.), though at the last, in almost frantic despair, she cries out against the injustice of her sentence (*ib.* 806ff.), and the chorus viewing her fate, sadly reflects upon the short duration of human happiness as compared with the length of evil days: *οὐδὲν ἔρπει / θνατῶν βιοτῷ πάμπολις ἔκτος ἄτας* (*ib.*

⁵¹ As Campbell (introd. ed. *Tr.*) expresses it: “The burden of the *Trachiniae* is that life is labor cheered by transient gleams of prosperity.”

⁵² Cf. chap. on attitude toward the Gods.

611f.). Moreover in l. 625: *δλιγιστον χρόνον ἐκτὸς ἄτας* (cf. 618, 622f.) the messenger speaks likewise of the uncertainty of the future and the instability of human fortunes (*ib.* 1156, 1161ff., 1169ff.). After the catastrophe Creon himself holds the same view and hopes for death as a blessed relief (*ib.* 1329ff.).

Throughout the greater part of the *Electra* the heroine speaks in a similar strain: up to the anagnorisis (l. 1217ff.) her words form one long dirge. Like Ajax (*Aj.* 404ff.), Deianira (*Tr.* 721), Antigone (*Ant.* 463), and other characters (fr. 952, *O.T.* 1368), Electra, when surrounded by hateful conditions and entirely separated from *τὸ καλόν*,⁵³ holds the ordinary Greek view of the worthlessness of life. Finally, goaded to despair, she determines that death is preferable to such a life as she has been leading (*El.* 821f.).

In the *Oedipus Coloneus* there are many parallel expressions of this idea,—that good fortune, as compared with the frequent and enduring difficulties of life, is brief (cf. 1211-1248, 1722). It is in this strain that Theseus speaks in l. 567f.; so too the chorus in l. 1211ff. Indeed, the greatest and deepest note of this play, is struck in ll. 607-615,—an expression of belief in the omnipotence of time over all things human, even over friendship. Yet this passage does not approximate the bitterness that underlies the words in ll. 1225ff., where the feeling of world-weariness finds expression: *μὴ θῦναι τὸν ἀπαντα νικᾶ λόγον· τὸ δ', ἐπεὶ φανῆ / βῆναι κείθεν θεν περ ἥκει, / πολὺ δεύτερον, ὡς τάχιστα.*

In the *Philoctetes* (cf. e.g. 177ff., 254ff., 503ff., 1209ff.), and in the fragments there are many similar references to the sadness and emptiness of life.⁵⁴ Thus, in fr. 945, we find in a mournful reflection upon the unhappiness of men, ‘who are but the semblance of shadows, a useless burden to the earth.’ Enjoyment is but brief: *ὡς ταχέων τις βροτοῖς χάρις διαρρέει* (fr. 497, cf. fr. 850). No one may be called happy till death (fr. 646, cf. *Tr.* 1ff.). This same tone appears also in fr. 949, where there is a mournful expression of the evils of old age.⁵⁵

But it is worth while to compare this view of old age with the

⁵³ This idea (Not to be born is best) is an ancient and familiar commonplace; cf. e.g. Mimnerm. fr. 2, Pind. *Pythe* VIII. 88.

⁵⁴ Cf. Pind. VIII. 95f. ‘Man is but the shadow of a dream.’

⁵⁵ Disparagement of old age is frequent among the Greek writers, no one of whom has surpassed Sophocles in this respect. (cf. the description of the intolerableness of old age in *O.C.* 1230ff.).

optimism⁵⁶ expressed in fr. 95: *οὐκ ἔστι γῆρας τῶν σοφῶν ἐν οἷς δὲ νοῦς . . . ξύνεστιν.* We may, in this connection, point out the contrast between the pessimistic belief in predestined calamity expressed in *Ant.* 1337—*μήν νυν προσένχον μηδέν.* ὡς πεπρωμένος / *οὐκ ἔστι θνητοῖς συμφορᾶς ἀπαλλαγή,*—with the frequent expressions of faith in the power of prayer to arouse the pity of the gods for oppressed supplicants.⁵⁷ Such widely variant views—whether they be purely dramatic and apply only to their particular context, or whether they reveal the outlook of the poet, or whether they merely express the popular thought—are not at all surprising. One draws various conclusions from life and, to a certain extent, our ideas today regarding fate and suffering are no more consistent than were those of the ancient Greeks. In studying their tragedies, therefore, one must take cognizance of the fact that the contradictions therein expressed cannot be wrought into complete, logical harmony.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Sophocles himself is said to have praised the calm of old age (cf. Pl. *Rep.* 385C).

⁵⁷ Cf. Chap. on Prayer.

⁵⁸ The attempt to force a body of coherent doctrines upon the casual utterances of a writer, especially of a poet, is one of the fallacies common in modern scholarship.

XV. ORACLES AND OTHER KINDS OF DIVINATION

The extreme fatalist needs no divination,¹—at least in so far as this art is an attempt to direct or to control the future. Yet the practice of divination is intimately connected with a belief in fate. And the Greeks, being more or less believers in fate, were always keenly interested in discovering the secrets of the future, as well as those of the present and the past. In the ancient world the most satisfactory means of securing this knowledge were the oracles, and more especially those at Dodona and at Delphi. These oracles, where some form of systematized divination was employed and where the people could find authoritative advice, were recognized centers of worship. That of Zeus at Dodona was undoubtedly of great antiquity.² The sacred grove there was in charge of the ‘mountain priests who sleep on the ground’ (*Tr.* 1168).³ Two Dodonean priestesses also are mentioned by Sophocles⁴ (*Tr.* 172, cf. fr. 456). He does not, however, definitely explain the manner in which the oracles at this precinct were given; for he vaguely combines the idea of prophetic priestesses⁵ with that of talking doves. It is from other evidence that we discover oracles were based chiefly upon the interpretations of sounds made by the rustling leaves of the sacred oak.⁶ In two passages Sophocles mentions this oak: *πολυγλώσσου δρυός* (*Tr.* 1168), *τὴν παλαιὰν φηγὸν αὐδῆσαι ποτε* (*ib.* 171). Further mention of Dodona is found in frs. 455, 460, and 461. While

¹ One might argue, on the other hand, that belief in oracles, which foretold the future (*Tr.* 169), really fostered fatalism in Greece.

² Cf. e.g. *Il.* II. 681, *Od.* XIII. 327.

³ Cf. Eur. fr. 355, Leaf on *Il.* XVI. 233, Jebb on *Tr.* 1166. Frazer (*C.R.* II. 322) points out similar curious customs among the ancient Germans and Romans.

⁴ Cf. *Il.* XVI. 233f., Rohde I, 1, Farnell I. 38ff., Bouche-Leclercq II. 277ff., H. J. Rose in Hastings IV. 797, Jebb appendix ed. *Tr.* p. 203.

⁵ The priestesses are regarded either as interpreters of the doves (cf. Strab. 7. 329), or they are merely given the fanciful name *peliades* (*Hdt.* II 55); cf. Jebb on *Tr.* 172, W. R. Halliday, *Gk. Divination* p. 265ff., Pearson on fr. 256. On the number of these priestesses cf. Jebb, appendix ed. *Tr.*

⁶ Cf. *Od.* XIV. 327, Diod. 17.50, Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 6. 119.

the chief oracles of Zeus were delivered at this shrine, there were oracles also at other sacred places devoted to his cult. The temple of Zeus at Abae, e.g., was evidently oracular,⁷ and is accordingly mentioned by Sophocles in close connection with Delphi (*O.T.* 899). Olympia, too, is spoken of in this passage as though the temple there were oracular, and we ascertain from other evidence that divination was practiced in that precinct.⁸

In time, the prestige of the oracle at Dodona was superseded by that at Delphi,⁹ and the latter sacred precinct became by far the most important oracular shrine in the ancient¹⁰ world. It was, indeed, here that Apollo, the son and confidant of omnipotent Zeus (cf. *O.C.* 623, 793; *O.T.* 470; *Aj.* 186f., fr. 313), was thought to inspire the Pythia¹¹ with prophetic vision. We are led to infer that she derived her inspiration by means of the laurel which she chewed before uttering the oracular words (cf. fr. 897).¹² This last is the only part of the imposing Delphic ritual mentioned by Sophocles, except the doubtful reference in fr. 15 to the delivery of the oracles by the sound of the harp,—*τι σοι δὲ Απόλλων κεκιθάρικεν*; Yet Delphi plays a very important part in a number of his plays. The moral lesson conveyed in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is distinctly the importance of that oracle, which interprets to man the sacred ways of heaven.

The way in which Sophocles treats the oracle concerning the death of Oedipus is worthy of note. On arriving at the grove of the Eumenides the aged hero immediately identifies the spot as the one foretold as his sanctuary and final goal (*O.C.* 46): ‘Apollo,

⁷ Cf. Hdt. 8. 33, Paus. 4. 32.5, 10.35.1.

⁸ Cf. Hdt. 9.33.

⁹ Delphi was originally held by Ge-Themis, perhaps in conjunction with Poseidon, if we may trust the legends; cf. Farnell IV. 181.

¹⁰ The point of paramount importance is to ascertain (if this be possible) on what foundation the authority of the Delphic oracle in particular was raised. It exercised for many centuries an enormous influence, and it acquired an almost exceptional reputation for truthfulness. It is impossible to believe that the people so trusted it on any other ground than that, in whatever degree, the oracle maintained the general principles of fair dealing, honesty and justice. If its power had rested wholly or mainly on ambiguous or equivocal answers (which, however, were returned chiefly to political inquirers), the reputation of the oracle would not long have been maintained.

¹¹ Cf. Eur. *Ion*. 1322. The Pythia was also said to become possessed by means of vapors exhaled from the chasm beneath the shrine; cf. Farnell IV. 180.

¹² No doubt the Pythia was originally conceived of as a spirit medium.

when he proclaimed that doom of many woes, spoke of this spot as a rest of the reverent goddesses' (*ib.* 87ff.). This oracle is mentioned vaguely and with apparent awe on the part of Oedipus: for the prophetic words are not to be treated lightly (*ib.* 622ff.).

The natural features of the place are frequently referred to by our poet. Like other writers, he often speaks of Delphi as a *μεσόμφαλα ἔστια* (e.g. *O.T.* 480, 897, 964; *O.C.* 413),—‘the navel hearth’ or central altar of the Greek world. This shrine may have been thus styled a ‘central navel’ in quite a literal sense, being located in the middle of a mound-shaped structure. The cavern that formed the vestibule is described as a ‘rocky (*O.T.* 463) cup-like hollow’ (*γυάλων*)¹³ fr. 460, and this term is extended until it applies to the whole temple and even to the sacred precinct in general.¹⁴ The elevated position of Delphi, on the side of Mt. Parnassus,¹⁵ is alluded to in *O.T.* 464; while the wealth stored there under the protection of the temple is also indicated (*ib.* 151).¹⁶ The oracle itself is addressed as the ‘golden child of hope, ambrosial speech (*χρυσέας τέκνον* “Ελπίδος, ἄμβροτε φάμα—*ib.* 157), and as the ‘prophetic voice of the gods’ (*ib.* 151, 463, 906: cf. *Ant.* 1013).

Vagueness of the oracle is implied in *O.T.* 279, where the obscure character of the answer sent from Delphi regarding the murder of Laius is complained of by the chorus. Oedipus here deprecates this attitude toward the oracle and he avers that the gods cannot be forced to do what mortals desire.¹⁷ In fr. 777 the proverbial ambiguity of oracular language is again proclaimed: ‘Such is the god,—to the wise, I think, a hunter of deep-meaning oracles, but to ordinary men a poor and brief speech.’

The awe-inspiring power of Delphi is repeatedly annunciated (e.g. *O.C.* 603, *O.T.* 1438). Neglect of an oracular command, indeed, was considered an open insult to the god. So, as Apollo had commanded the Thebans to cast out the pollution caused by the murder

¹³ This is the Nauck reading, accepted as certain by Pearson. The reference is especially to the Delphic sanctuary; cf. *Hom. h. Apol.* 396, *Hes. Th.* 499, *Eur. Andr.* 1003.

¹⁴ Cf. Harrison, *Papers in Honor of Wm. Ridgeway*, p. 151.

¹⁵ Cf. *Eur. Andr.* 998.

¹⁶ The immense riches stored at Delphi were celebrated in literature from Homer down.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ant.* 1060, *O.C.* 1526. The word *akineta* belongs to the religious terminology of sacrifice; cf. chap. on Survivals.

of their king (*ib.* 96ff.), search for the guilty man had to be prosecuted and accomplished,—if for no other reason, merely for the sake of the god (*ib.* 252ff.).

Sacred envoys to Delphi are mentioned in *O.C.* 413.¹⁸ King Laius himself was a pilgrim (*θεωρός*) on his way to Delphi (*O.T.* 114) when he encountered his son, who likewise had gone to consult the oracle (*ib.* 788ff.). Later when he became king of Thebes and the land was being ravished by pestilence, Oedipus at once sought further help from Delphi, sending Creon as messenger ‘to the Pythian house of Phoebus’ to inquire by what means the state might be saved (*ib.* 70f.) (All this precedes the opening of the drama). Then, when Creon returns from this sacred embassy and is accused of treachery, he immediately demands that an appeal be made to the Delphic oracle regarding the facts in the case (*ib.* 603f.).

Not only Delphic, but also Ismenian¹⁹ Apollo is revered as truly oracular (*O.T.* 21). The truth of oracular decrees is looked upon as a glory for the gods (*O.T.* 871). Doubt of the truth of the oracles, however, is often expressed (e.g. *Ant.* 1012; *El.* 1425; *O.T.* 906, 1011; *O.C.* 629, 792.). The most frequent and the strongest derogatory references of this character are to be found in *O.T.* 501f., 946, 977f.²⁰ This depreciation of divine inspiration, whether of oracles or of sooth-sayers, which is expressed here by Oedipus (391ff.) and more boldly by Jocasta (707ff., 857f.) is what chiefly constitutes their guilt in the eyes of the Greek chorus and serves to render the catastrophe compatible with poetic justice. We should realize, however, that the queen’s words of scorn in l. 946f. are pointed, not at the gods²¹ themselves, but at those who profess to speak in the name of the gods. Such questioning of the genuineness of oracles or of their special application was probably no uncommon thing. Here a distinction is made by Jocasta between the direct manifestation of the will of the gods and the possibly mistaken or falsification of that divine will by human prophets.

In the *Oedipus at Colonus*, too, and the *Electra* the oracle likewise inspires the leading characters. Though not the mainspring of the

¹⁸ Cf. *Aes.* *Ag.* 1254; *Eur. Supp.* 138.

¹⁹ Cf. *Hdt.* I. 34 and *Paus.* IX. 10.

²⁰ Cf. *Eur. Phoen.* 1256.

²¹ A similar discrimination is necessary in examining her Epicurean view of life expressed *ib.* 977ff.: the words there do not involve a denial of divine government, but only of human power to understand or alter its course.

action in the other plays, it is nevertheless usually a prominent factor; cf. e.g. *Tr.* 157ff., 1159ff. and *Ph.* 113, 347, 1196, 1409ff. In the *Ajax*, indeed, the part played by the seer is only episodic and his warning comes too late; as a technical device, however, prophecy is here used quite artistically.

The treatment of the seer in Sophocles has been the subject of much discussion. In general, the office²² is looked up to as one of high honor, as the *μάντης*²³ is considered the servant of Apollo (*ib.* 410f.) and his prophetic communications accordingly valued as divine (*ib.* 42f.). This position, as the mouthpiece of heaven, loans the authority and sanction to his interpretation of signs and predictions²⁴ of what was to come to pass. At times the seer was blamed for his prophecies, nevertheless, on the supposition that he possessed 'mana,'—the will to make things happen. At first, indeed, Teiresias is introduced to us in highly complimentary fashion; the chorus calls him 'a seer most like Apollo, the best of all guides to search the truth' (*ib.* 284ff.), and addresses him as *ἄναξ*, an honorable title of illustrious men (cf. *ib.* 911, *O.C.* 831, 988). Oedipus, too, first addresses Teiresias in terms of reverence and eulogy (*ib.* 307-315). Later, however, aroused to wrath, the king cries: 'Thy prophetic art was found wanting when the riddle was to be solved: neither birds nor sign from the gods helped thee. But I came, with no fore-knowledge: I stopped her, guided by intelligence, knowing naught of auguries' 391ff; cf. 500ff.). Many are the words of infamy and derision he heaps upon Teiresias: *ἀ κακῶν κάκιστε* (334), *σὺ δὲ ἄθλιος* (372), *μιᾶς τρέφει πρὸς νυκτός* (374), *δόλιον ἀγύρτην* (388), *κακοῦργον* (705). In his sudden anger and wanton suspicion, Oedipus disregards the sacred character of the seer and accuses him of accepting bribes and of interpreting events in collusion with the king's adversary. At this charge the venerable prophet shows serene confidence in his gift of prophecy, and, seeing that his confidence is repulsed and the dignity of his sacred calling assailed, he gives vent (424f.) to righteous indignation²⁴ and his prediction of the guilty king's ruin quickly follows.

²² In regard to position of soothsayers in the age of Soph. cf. Bouche-Léciercq, *Hist de la divination dans l'antiquité* II. 82ff., and also Decharme, *Eur. and the Spirit of his Dramas*, (eng. ed. 1905), 66ff.

²³ This word sometimes seems only a general term for magician (*Aes. Ag.*).

²⁴ On the proposed vagueness in the dark words of the excited seer, cf. Kenedy, *Studia Sophoclea* (Cambridge, 1874), 64f.

Likewise in the *Antigone* we find sneering references²⁵ to prophets (e.g. 1037). Thus Creon says 'the prophet-tribe was ever fond of money' (1055), and 'Soon we shall know better than seers could tell us'²⁶ (631). Later he learns to his sorrow, however, that the prophetic vision of Teiresias was only too true (1261ff.). Like Oedipus (*O.T.* 1182), Creon might well explain: *τὰ πάντα’ ἀν ἔξηκοι σαφῆ*.²⁷

We note also that in the *Trachiniae* the chorus sings of the fulfillment of prophecy (l. 821). In the *Ajax*, moreover, honor is paid to the prophetic art in the way in which Chalcas, the traditional seer of the Greeks at Troy, is represented as receiving great honor. He is represented as moving in the circle of chieftains as their peer (749ff.). His prophetic words are listened to with reverence and with belief (750., cf. *El.* 534, fr. 34). Helenus, another famous seer, receives similar respect (*Ph.* 1338). His words about Philoctetes are referred to time and time again in this play (e.g. 347, 610, 1324). Furthermore, we find mention of the seers Poluidus (fr. 390, 391) and Amphiaraus (*El.* 836, fr. 113). Other prophets and prophecies²⁸ are also occasionally referred to; cf. e.g. *O.C.* 355, 389, 1300, frs. 59, 573.

In addition to those forms of divination mentioned in connection with Dodona and Delphi, several others are referred to occasionally. 'Εμπυρομαντική,' divination by fire, is spoken of in *O.T.* 21, *Ant.* 1005ff., and also in fr. 1006. In this rite the omen was good or bad according to the aspects of the fire: if the fire burned feebly or was smothered in the smoke, it was interpreted as an ill omen (*Ant.* 1005ff.).²⁹

Another mode of divination employed among the Greeks was one by means of bladders tied with wool (fr. 399). These bladders were exposed to fire, and the manner of their bursting was considered significant for interpretation of omens. Double spits likewise were used in augury. In one of the lost plays Sophocles, according to an old commentator,³⁰ used this term in a general sense to designate augury from entrails.

²⁵ Cf. Eur. *Rhes.* 949, *H.F.* 911, *I.A.* 520, *Hel.* 755.

²⁶ This word *saphes* is used for a true prophet also in *O.C.* 623, 792, *O.T.* 39, *Tr.* 387.

²⁷ Cf. Eur. *I.T.* 161, *Phoen.* 1255.

²⁸ For reference to other favorite prophets in Gk. drama, cf. Ar. *av.* 959ff., *Pax* 1046, *eq.* 1269; Eur. *Supp.* 155ff., *Ion.* 374, *Hipp.* 1058f., *El.* 406ff., *Phoen.* 954ff., *I.A.* 520, *I.T.* 574f., *Hel.* 744ff., fr. 795.

²⁹ For a full treatment of this subject cf. Bouche-Leclercq Vol. I; also cf. Farnell Vol. I. s.v. Apollo and Zeus: IV. s.v. Apollo.

³⁰ Cf. Aes. *Ag.*; Eur. 117, *H.F.* 596, *I.A.* 607, *Hel.* 730, 1051.

Diviners often foretold events thus by signs seen in the inspection of the entrails of sacrificial victims. The gall and the thighs of the victim offered are mentioned as part of the sacrifice (*Ant.* 1008). Though no definite sign is given in this instance, still the seer interprets the whole as unfavorable and he feels a presentiment of evil (*ib.* 1016ff.). The epithet 'all-blazing' (*παμφλέκτοισι*, *ib.* 1006) marks the care with which the preparation has been made. The failure to secure a favorable issue was not due, then, to any negligence on the part of the official in charge of the sacrifice. Except in matters of great importance, where an oracle was consulted, this form of divination, viz. haruspicy, was the normal and official Greek method of ascertaining the future.

Augury from birds was another form of divination commonly employed by the ancients. In Sophocles we find frequent reference to omens of this kind (e.g. *O.T.* 52, 395, fr. 137).³⁰ The habits of birds, especially their feeding, were closely inspected (*O.T.* 484f.). Their postures, flight, cries, feuds, and agreements were also observed (*Ant.* 999ff., 1021; *O.T.* 966). Omens from birds, (*El.* 1058) are likewise referred to in *O.T.* 310, 395, 398; *O.C.* 1314; *Ant.* 1000. Peculiar importance was attached by ancient diviners to the utterances of the raven. Its croak, however, was not necessarily inauspicious (fr. 208). Furthermore, the region of the sky in which birds appeared was carefully noted (cf. fr. 654).

Moreover we find a few references to omens from dreams. That a dream may somehow be prophetic was commonly believed by the Greeks and there are many references in their literature to this form of divination. Yet, as it was considered that dreams were a form of communication with the underworld (cf. *El.* 417ff.), such chthonic oracles were more or less opposed by the Apolline cult. This doubtless accounts for the absence in Sophocles of frequent mention of omens deduced from dreams.³¹ The only important reference here to belief in prophetic dreams is that about the night-vision or dream which comes to queen Clytemnestra and fills her with foreboding (*El.* 417ff., 644). This dream-omen suggesting renewed strength in the descendants of Agamemnon, is quickly fulfilled in the course of the drama and culminates in the murder of his enemies by Orestes, his son.³²

³¹ But the reason may simply be the superiority of the oracle to the dream as a technical device.

³² This dream of Clytemnestra's, in varied form, appears also in Aes. *Cho.* 526ff. and Eur. *Or.* 616ff. In all three dramatists the idea is suggested that the dead Agamemnon is responsible for the dream-visitation.

XVI. SURVIVALS

Greek ritual evidently preserved matter of great antiquity, and among the beliefs and customs referred to in Greek drama we see many survivals of an earlier stage in religious development.¹ Ideas of taboo, expiatory and apotropaic rites, and kindred topics warrant close attention. Owing to the heterogeneous character of such references, however, there can be but little coherence to the discussion of their nature and their significance.

In the first place, then, we may note that use of the ordeal as a test of veracity was known to the Greeks. We are sure of this fact from the very definite reference to ordeal by fire in *Ant.* 264. Here the guard states that he and his companions have expressed their willingness ‘to take red-hot² irons in their hands’ (*μνδρούς αἴρειν χεροῦν*) in order to prove their innocence. Moreover these men declare that they are ready ‘to go through fire’³ (*πῦρ διέρπειν*) as a test of their oath. This is undoubtedly one of the oldest⁴ pieces of evidence regarding ancient ordeals analogous to the mediaeval ‘judgments of god’.⁵ These passages, whether they be mere rhetorical utterances⁶ or whether they really point to a definite ordeal, are quite

¹ Cf. E. Thärmer in Hastings VI. 540.

² The word *mudros* is used likewise by other authors in connection with the solemn sanction of an oath: cf. Hdt. I. 165.

³ The phrase ‘going through fire’ was a familiar one among the Greeks (cf. e.g. Xen. *Symp.* 416), as a form of strong asseveration.

⁴ Cf. G. Glotz; *L'ordalie dans la Grèce Primitive*, Paris, 1904.

⁵ Paus. VII. 25.8. Such a method of testing the innocence or guilt of suspected parties was prevalent in Europe during mediaeval times. The fire-ordeal was performed by taking a red-hot iron in the hand, or by walking barefoot and blindfold over red-hot plough-shares. If the person escaped unharmed, he was adjudged innocent. Ordeal by water was practiced also. In this test the one suspected had either to plunge his bare arm into boiling water, or be cast into a body of cold water. If the arm were not hurt, or,—in the latter case,—if the person sank, he was acquitted. Possibly the passage about the ‘waters of jealousy’ in the book of *Numbers*, ch. 5, is a reference to such an ordeal among the Hebrews. Among the Romans likewise ordeals were known; cf. e.g. Hor. *Od.* II. I, Verg. *Aen.* XI. 787.

⁶ Cf. e.g. the oaths administered in the ritual of Free Masonry; cf. Makay’s *History of Free Masonry*.

important. Though not certain evidence of the actual current practice of trial by fire, such colloquial expressions at least indicate familiarity with the idea of ordeals. Information about similar rites among the Greeks is scanty, but such appeals by trial to the gods may well have been common in Greece as elsewhere.

The⁷ primitive custom of human sacrifice, however, is referred to simply as a part of the traditional Iphigenia story, (*El.* 571f.). On the other hand, the burning of an effigy,⁸ mentioned in fr. 536, may well have survived as a common practice in Sophocles' own time, as a process of sympathetic magic by which the love or the death of the original person was sought.⁹ The practice of this kind of sorcery certainly survived in latter ages, either as a means of effecting a charm or, as in our time, in jest and ridicule.

More extensive in influence than the foregoing survivals is the primitive idea of taboo,¹⁰ belief in which is frequently expressed. The person or thing under taboo was either an object of vengeance (e.g. *O.C.* 153ff.) or one of horror (e.g. *Ant.* 1016ff.). In either case direct contact was to be avoided. As the taboo was thought of as being transmissible by infection, the fact that a person under such a stigma was morally innocent (e.g. *O.T.* 113) did not alter his status as a menace to the community in which he dwelt (e.g. *Ant.* 1016ff.). Sharing one's hearth with a sinner, therefore, was thought to bring pollution upon the household (*ib.* 373, *O.T.* 240, 249).¹¹ Even casual association with a polluted man was supposed to be dangerous: for the pollution could be contracted by sight, as we see from *O.T.* 1482.,—where the chorus exclaim 'May no unprofitable recompense' (i.e. disaster) 'come upon me for looking upon a man accursed.' Similar feeling is expressed in *El.* 460, 1489; *O.T.* 141, 762; *O.C.* 22ff., 285, 755.¹²

Pollution by direct contact with a murderer was considered especially perilous (*O.T.* 1413f., *O.C.* 1139ff.). The 88sf, or pollution, of Oedipus is such that even the pure elemental powers (the sun,

⁷ Cf. Bacchyl. V. 146ff. Grote, *His. Gr.* II. 170, discusses the extent to which human sacrifices prevailed in Gr. within historic or semi-historic times.

⁸ On charms and incantations, cf. e.g., A. Taylor; Judas Iscariot in charms and Incantations, *Wash. Univ. Studies*, 1920, 8, 3-17.

⁹ Cf. Theoc. II, Paris Pap. Z 1496.

¹⁰ Cf. Hastings I. 252, 278; VI. 540. Belief in taboo is more or less universal.

¹¹ To the Greek, the chief religious importance of the hearth, lay in the fact that the hearth was an asylum of refuge; cf. e.g. Aes. *Ag.* 1587, Eur. *H.F.* 715.

¹² Cf. Eur. *El.* 1354.

earth, water, light, etc.) were thought to be contaminated by its presence.¹³ Indeed, the entire state is thought to be defiled by this contagion (*O.T.* 97, 313, 353, 1227f.).¹⁴ He may not even be buried in Theban soil; the guilt of a kinsman's blood upon his hands debars him (*O.C.* 406f.).¹⁵ Likewise, the presence of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, who are guilty of the murder of Agamemnon, was considered a miasma to the state and to the house in which they dwelt: for, unabsolved from their crime,¹⁶ they had continued to use the public altars (*El.* 625) and to pour libations at the domestic hearth (*ib.* 269). Apollo was looked upon as the purger of such a pollution and,¹⁷ as his agent of purification, Orestes is here represented as the *καθάρτης* (*ib.* 69f.). Like Orestes, Hyllus also considers his mother polluted, because of the part she had in the death of his father (*Tr.* 733-820). Even conversing with her is painful to him; for according to the Greeks it was not pious for the relatives of a slain man to have any avoidable intercourse with the polluted slayer.¹⁸ The great Heracles himself is said to have been forced to expiate in bondage the pollution incurred by murder (*Tr.* 257).¹⁹

Death from starvation also caused miasma. Creon, through a curious subterfuge, seeks to avoid pollution and expiation for the murder of Antigone by putting in her tomb only just so much food as piety prescribes.²⁰ Another reason for doing so is that the city may avoid a public stain (*Ant.* 775f.). Later on in the play, Creon again declares his freedom from this pollution, saying: 'Our hands are free as touching this maiden.'²¹ Two primitive ideas seem to be blended here: that, if a little food were given, death would be the result of natural causes; and also that in a case of this kind the nether gods claimed *έναγισματα*. Offerings of some sort, indeed, were considered the just dues of the dead (cf. *El.* 405, 452, 894;

¹³ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 285, Eur. *Or.* 1085, *Hipp.* 1030.

¹⁴ Cf. Eur. *Or.* 1584.

¹⁵ Cf. Farnell III. 115.

¹⁶ This *Miasma* was, in a way, regarded as something material, to be purged by expiatory ceremonies.

¹⁷ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 63.

¹⁸ Cf. Lys. 12.24., Isoc. 9.20.

¹⁹ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 325, *Cho.* 154.

²⁰ Cf. *Ph.* 274, Plut. *Num.* 10.

²¹ Another claim for his freedom from the stain of murder is that he had not only altered the doom of stoning to that of interment, but had also given public warning of the penalty of disregard of his proclamation.

Ant. 196, 247, 1071; *O.C.* 402, 1713f.) and, if such offerings were not regularly given, the spirit of the dead was a force to be feared (*ib.* 406f.). Even for a stranger to pass by an unburied corpse without throwing dust upon it was considered dangerous to him (*Ant.* 256). By proper rites, such a pollution might be removed and the protection of the gods regained. Thus in the purification of the polluted Oedipus (*O.C.* 466), who, from a baneful power, becomes a beneficent one,²² at least for Athens (*ib.* 308); though his tomb was to remain a curse to his native state (*ib.* 402, 621ff.). Here, as well as in *Ant.* 775f., the idea implied is that a wrong perpetrated by the ruler, or upon the ruler, may bring down the wrath of heaven upon a nation. In like manner the plague devastating the land of Thebes at the opening of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is conceived of as the consequence of a national wrong. Such a belief is a survival of totemistic habits of thinking.²³

Totemism, likewise, is a possible explanation of the idea that spirits possess animals or inanimate objects. Thus the snake that bit Philoctetes (*Ph.* 1325ff.) represents the wrathful spirit of a goddess. This daimonic character of the serpent is often alluded to in Greek literature and Greek art,²⁴ and manifold chthonic duties are associated with this animal. In frs. 226 and 362, for instance, we find allusions to serpents that act as guardians of springs.²⁵ To slay one of these guardians was considered dangerous, as we see from the myth of Philoctetes, whose long years of suffering are said to be the consequence of his killing the serpentine guardian of Chryse's sanctuary (*Ph.* 266).²⁶ Another curious notion appears in fr. 743, where serpents are said to drink blood. A similar thought is found in fr. 660, where reference is made to the appearance of serpents at a sacrifice. Again, in fr. 596, we find mention of serpents, here represented as drawing the magic car²⁷ of Triptolemus. There

²² For the graves of heroes as safeguards of the land cf. Jebb ed. *O.C.* XXIX.

²³ Cf. Harrison. *Themis* 534.

²⁴ Cf. E. Kuester, *Die Schlange in d. gr. Kunst u. Relig.* (Giessen diss., 1913).

²⁵ For the popular belief that the spirit of any animal is dangerous to its slayer, cf. fr. 399.

²⁶ For a list of Greek divinities that were supposed to have a serpent as attendant or ornament, cf. Hewitt, *Harv. Stud.*, XV. 70f. Some of these deities were originally conceived as serpents: for totemism in general, cf. S. Reinach, *Cults, myths, and religion*. ch. I.

²⁷ O. Kern (*Eleusin. Beitr.*, Halle, 1909, p. 11) shows that the Eleusinian mystery play supplied Sophocles with his description of the magic car of Triptolemus.

is, besides, an allusion to the sacred serpent on the Acropolis (fr. 643).

The winged sphinx (*O.T.* 508, etc.) is likewise a survival of totemistic belief in chthonic spirits.²⁸ This creature is a complex development,—something of a bogey form of personified death²⁹ (*ib.* 1198ff.) or mantic earth-demon (*ib.* 391f.). While local ghosts in Greece were usually conceived of as serpents, in this instance it appears that the sphinx represents the spirit of the locality. Like the serpent and the sphinx, the dragon also is a symbol of a chthonic spirit.³⁰ Though a mere heraldic device, the dragon on the shield mentioned in *Ant.* 126 may be interpreted as a faint echo of belief in the potency of such earth-spirits.³¹

Furthermore, to prevent vengeance of the dead upon the living, the corpse was sometimes mutilated by murderers³² (fr. 623). Electra says that her father's corpse was thus 'dishonored,³³ as though he were an enemy' (ἀτιμος, ὥστε δυσμενης) (*El.* 444). These words seem to imply that mutilation of the bodies of enemies was an ordinary Greek custom.³⁴ Possibly this was commonly resorted to by the Greeks of the Homeric age.³⁵ But the sentiment underlying such an act is certainly not representative of Sophocles' own time. The real motive for such treatment of the dead was fear of the ghost of a slain enemy; the act was intended to deprive the victim's spirit of the power to harm the slayers, just as the living body is made powerless by such treatment.³⁶ After having thus mutilated her

²⁸ For the chthonic nature of the sphinx cf. *Theog.* 326, Eur. *Phoen.* 810.

²⁹ On the *ker* as a form of personified death, cf. Harrison *JHS*. XIX. 235.

³⁰ Cf. Aes. *Sept.* 776, Harrison, *Proleg.* 207ff.

³¹ Cf. W. Schwartz. *Die Altgr. Schlangen-gottheiten*, Berlin, 1897.

³² Information on this subject is derived from Hesych., *Phot.*, Suid., *Et. Mag.*, scholia on *El.* 445 and Apoll. Rhod. IV. 477. cf. Paley, Tucker, and Wilamowitz on Aes. *Cho.* 439; Rohde I 322ff.; Kittridge *AJP*. VI. 151ff. The original meaning was 'to cut off the arms.' Later the word was generalized so as to apply to other members of the body, and the full meaning of the word came to be 'to cut off the arms and feet and suspend them from the armpits.'

³³ This reference appears to be a conscious imitation of the Aeschylean version (cf. *Cho.* 439ff.).

³⁴ Cf. Hdt. 9.79, Moschion fr. 3. Even as a punishment of the living, mutilation is rarely mentioned in Greek literature, and then usually with abhorrence: cf. *Od.* 18.85, Aes. *Eum.* 186ff., Pl. *Gorg.* 473, Ael. *Var. Hist.* 5.11, Apoll. Rhod. 186ff.

³⁵ Cf. *Il.* XXII 371, *Od.* XXII. 475.

³⁶ Cf. Chapter on Status of the Dead. That an injury to a corpse was an injury also to the departed spirit is a widespread idea. Many peoples of all times have

husband's corpse, Clytemnestra is said to have wiped the blood upon his head (*κάρα / κηλιδασὲξεμαξεν*) as if to purge from herself the pollution of the murder and turn it upon the victim³⁷ (*El.* 445f). This passage is the only positive reference in Greek literature to such a primitive device of purification.

Before passing to an examination of further superstitions, we will discuss briefly certain technical expressions used by Sophocles,—those regarding pollution and taboo. Such an expression is *μάστωρ*, a word of various significations. Properly it means 'polluter' or 'murderer,' and is so used with reference to Aegisthus in *El.* 275; cf. also *O.T.* 353, where Oedipus is called an unholy polluter of the land (*γῆς τῆσδ' ἀνοσίω μάστωρι*). But in *El.* 603 the word is applied to Orestes as an 'avenger of pollution.'³⁸ Conversely *ἀλάστωρ*, which properly means 'avenger' (fr. 1092), comes to be used in the sense of 'curse' (*O.C.* 788)³⁹ or 'accursed wretch' (*Aj.* 374). Dread of a dead man's spirit led to this idea of blood guilt and an avenging curse (cf. *Tr.* 1235). *'Αλαστός* and *ἀλάστορος*, cognate⁴⁰ words, were used so often by the Greeks that they almost lost the meaning 'polluted' (e.g. *O.C.* 1482) and came to mean merely 'wretched'⁴¹ (e.g. *ib.* 537). Another word of dual meaning is *ἄγος*, signifying whatever is consecrated to a god (*Ant.* 775, frs. 235, 689). This same word may be used also for objects of fear (*ib.* 256) and of abhorrence, (*O.T.* 1427).⁴² *'Αραῖος*, likewise, has a double aspect: for the sinner and his victim are both possible sources of pollution (*O.T.* 1291,

believed in a close relation between the soul and its discarded body, and that mutilation of the dead prevents the ghosts from taking vengeance. Hence the vast importance attached to the rites of burial throughout the ages. Instances of individual and also of collective mutilation of the bodies of enemies have been reported. Taylor (*Prim. Cult.* I. 451ff.) shows that this custom still exists among certain peoples today.

³⁷ We find a vague trace of such a practice in *Od.* 19.92, *Hdt.* l. 154, and *Aes. Cho.* 439.

³⁸ Cf. *Aes. Eum.* 176, *Eur. Med.* 1371. *Prostropaios* or 'the god to whom the murdered turns for vengeance' (e.g. *Antiphon* 125.32), likewise used to designate the avenging spirit that pursues the living. But in Sophocles this word is used only with reference to suppliants (*Aj.* 171, *O.C.* 1309, *Ph.* 929: cf. *Eum.* 40, 232. See also *Hesych.* s.v. *Phot.* s.v. *Suid.* s.v.

³⁹ Cf. *Aes. Ag.* 501, 1508.

⁴⁰ *Alastor* was frequently conceived of as a sort of avenging demon that, from feuds between rival clans or families, led people into crime; cf. *Eur. H.F.* 1234.

⁴¹ The early meaning of this word is sometimes over-emphasized by modern students.

⁴² Cf. *Aes. Cho.* 149, *Paus.* 4.138, *Frazer G.B.* II. 304.

fr. 110). Moreover, the word came to be applied generally to persons or things that bring calamity (*Tr.* 1199f.).⁴³ This word was sometimes used merely to denote what was ‘accursed’ (*Ant.* 866.).⁴⁴ Then it came to be used especially of those ‘bound by a curse,’ as in *O.T.* 644, where Creon, in denying the charge of conspiracy, in order to attest his innocence, bound himself by a curse.⁴⁵ Moreover, in *Ph.* 1178 this term is given as a epithet of Zeus,⁴⁶ thus implying that the god attended to the curses of mortals. In fr. 399 Sophocles seems to apply this word ἀράνος to the corpse or to the disembodied spirit of an animal; if so, the instance is a curious one.⁴⁷ Παλαμνάνος is another word applied to one polluted by murder (*El.* 87). Furthermore, we find in fr. 253 the word ἀφωσιωμέναι, to separate from ‘ὅσια,’ i.e. ‘to make taboo.’⁴⁸ Αφιέναι, a technical word of opposite meaning⁴⁹ (in *O.T.* 707) denotes ‘to release from a charge of murder,’ i.e. ‘to remove from taboo.’ Likewise ἐκθέειν⁵⁰ signifies ‘to remove a ban or taboo by performing due sacrifices’ (*El.* 572).⁵¹

Another relic of an early stage in religious development reflected in these plays is the belief in the mysterious potency of words. This is seen in the sentiment that enjoins silence in regard to certain matters.⁵² ‘It is not well to break silence touching mysteries,’ says Oedipus to the chorus in *O.C.* 624. A similar feeling is shown also in the following passages: *El.* 519; *O.C.* 167f., 280f., 301, 1556f.; frs. 61, 365, 667. The technical terms used for such matters of religious awe and mystery is ἀκίνητα (*O.C.* 624, *Ant.* 1060), & δ’έξαγιστα

⁴³ Cf. Aes. *Ag.* 235, 1397; Eur. *Hipp.* 1415; *Tro.* 1202; *I.T.* 778; *Med.* 606. This word is not found outside of tragedy, except in Pl. *Legg.* II. 931C.

⁴⁴ Cf. Aes. *Sept.* 785, Eur. *Hel.* 695.

⁴⁵ But we find a similiar epithet *alastoros* in Cramer *Anec.* I. 63. This epithet of Zeus is not found elsewhere in extant literature.

⁴⁶ Cf. Eupolus fr. 88, Menand. fr. 763.

⁴⁷ Cf. Frazer, *G.B.* II. 389, for evidence attesting the prevalence of the belief that the spirits of dead animals exact retribution.

⁴⁸ Cf. Harrison *Proleg.* 59, 108.

⁴⁹ This is similiar to *agānizein* signifying, ‘to disenchant’ or ‘release from taboo’ (cf. Aes. *Eum.* 454).

⁵⁰ Cf. Hdt. 6.91.

⁵¹ Cf. Aes. *Eum.* 418. Hatch (*Harv. Stud.* XIX. 159) discusses many technical religious words of this kind.

⁵² The very primitive idea of a charm preserved by absolute silence is referred to by Sophocles in the myth of the silent marriage of Peleus and Thetis (fr. 618). The spell which bound the goddess to the mortal in this case was broken by speech. Cf. Schmidt’s explanation of this taboo in *N. Jahrb. f. kl. alt.* XXVII. 648, 1911.

μηδὲ κινέῖται λόγῳ (*O.C.* 1526). Moreover, as the gods were believed to come in person to the sacrifices offered to them, it was necessary to avoid any language or behavior that might be displeasing to them (*Ph.* 1032f.). A solemn silence was, therefore, observed during prayer and during other religious service.⁵³ We find several references, both explicit and implicit, to this religious precaution. This in *El.* 630, e.g., Clytemnestra says to her daughter: 'Will you not hush your clamor and let me sacrifice?' *Eὐφημία* was likewise considered necessary when good tidings arrived: for the Greeks were careful not to mingle good and evil, lest the good should in any way be marred. So in *Tr.* 178 the chorus bid Deianira be silent, that the ominous tone of her speech may not check the good fortune which the messenger is about to report.⁵⁴ Bad luck was attached even to the naming of a living person as dead (*El.* 59). In fact all direct mention of death was deprecated as ill-omened (*ib.* 1467, 1209f., *O.T.* 939ff.).⁵⁵ The euphemistic use of the plural in calling attention to the state of the dead (is noted. *Ant.* 1263f., etc.). This feeling was extended to misfortune in general, which the Greeks always hesitated to mention or to predict (cf. e.g. *Tr.* 48). Closely allied to this is the feeling expressed in stereotyped blessings (e.g. *Ph.* 509, 775), and curses (e.g. *ib.* 279, 315).⁵⁶ A similar survival appears in Clytemnestra's answer to the messenger's expression of good wishes; she hastens to welcome the greeting and to appropriate the good omen it contains: *ἔδεξά μην τὸ ρῆθεν*.⁵⁷ This belief in the magic potency of words is probably the relic of some earlier system of divination whose real essence was forgotten.⁵⁸

Furthermore, in the ritual described or referred to by Sophocles we note a number of survivals, the origin and meaning of which,

⁵³ On *euphemia* cf. Wilamowitz on *Eur. H.F.* 1188 and Kaibel on *El.* 630.

⁵⁴ This same suggestion appears in fuller form in *Aes. Ag.* 636f. Wunder (n. on either *Tr.* 178 or *Ag.* 636) conclusively proves that this idea of deprecating sad forebodings is present, more or less strongly, in every instance in which some phrase is used to enforce silence.

⁵⁵ Cf. Jones, *The Poet. Plur of Greek Tragedy* (Cornell diss. 1909).

⁵⁶ Cf. *Aes. Cho.* 138. Many such ideas and practices survive among people of the present day, of course.

⁵⁷ Her haste to accept the words of good omen is revealed in the form of the verb employed, the so-called 'instantaneous' aorist. Cf. *Hdt.* 8.114, 9.91; *Aes. Ag.* 1653; *Eur. El.* 622. This idea of quickly accepting greetings of good omen may here denote merely an act of courtesy.

⁵⁸ Mention has already been made, in the chapter on Zeus, of the emphatic care evident in the employment of the proper epithet of god.

though the forms were carefully observed, were no longer understood. Greek rites of purification were in general of a primitive character. Thus in *Aj.* 655, *O.C.* 469f., and *O.T.* 1227f., washing is referred to as a symbol of purification from sin.⁵⁹ The water for such a ceremony had to be quite clear (cf. *O.C.* 469).⁶⁰ Another primitive idea prevailing in expiatory ritual was the taboo against looking back after pouring the libation (*ib.* 490).⁶¹ In this passage and in fr. 534 we see that it was customary to avert the eyes even in the course of making such an offering. A reference to still another primitive rite is given in fr. 398, where the offering of first fruits to induce a continuance of fertility is described. Wine is mentioned as part of the offering,⁶² and the whole sacrifice here described is probably fireless. It is clear, at least, that it is bloodless.⁶³

Moreover, we find several traces of superstitions about blood. Thus in fr. 178 a bull's blood is said to be possessed of special power.⁶⁴ In like manner the fatal poison on the robe of Heracles⁶⁵ is represented as being made from the blood of the dead centaur (*Tr.* 680ff.). Likewise, magical power is ascribed to the herb that grew where the blood of Prometheus had fallen (fr. 316). Then, too, in *O.C.* 622 Oedipus declares that his 'corpse will one day drink the warm blood of his enemies'.⁶⁶ Not only ghosts, but also living men are spoken of as drinking blood in savage enmity: at least, the desire to do so is charged against Polyneices (*Ant.* 201).⁶⁷

Dreams, as we have noted in our chapter on divination, have

⁵⁹ Cf. *Aes. Pers.* 578, *P.V.* 715; *Eur. Or.* 429, *I.T.* 1128, *Jnschr. of Cos.* 38. 233.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Aes. Pers.* 606, *Theoc.* XXII. 38. Th. Waechter (*Reinheitsvorschriften im griechischen Kult*, Giessen diss., 1910.), holds the daimonistic theory for all purification ceremonies in Greece. But Farnell (*V. W. C. S.*, 1912, p. 64) holds that much of the Gk. cathartic system probably descended from a preanimistic age, when certain things were looked upon as mysteriously impure,—a period antedating any explicit daimonistic belief.

⁶¹ Cf. *Aes. Cho.* 92. The underlying purpose was evidently to avoid the danger of looking directly at the evil spirits supposed to be at hand.

⁶² Cf. *Aes. Pers.* 616. Harrison formerly (*Proleg.* 159) regarded the wine offering as a latter addition to primitive ceremony: but in *Them.* 294 she treats the whole sacrifice as a magical rite.

⁶³ Cf. Frothingham, *A. J. A.* 21, 1917, p. 57.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Ar. Eq.* 84 with the schol.: also Frazer-Paus. 4.175, Suid. s.v., Gruppe p. 877.

⁶⁵ The arrows of Philoctetes and the poisonous robe sent to Heracles are, perhaps, relics of mythology and phraseology pertaining to the fiery action of the sun.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Aes. Eum.* 910, *Sept.* 733.

⁶⁷ The expression may be merely rhetorical.

been a matter of much curious belief among all peoples, and the Greeks were no exception to the rule in regard to such superstition (*El.* 410ff., 636; frs. 63, 649 l. 37).⁶⁸ Thus Clytemnestra is filled with superstitious terror at the evils foreboded by her dreams (*El.* 647). The repetition⁶⁹ of a dream was especially feared as a sign of the imminence of the reality (*ib.* 645). Moreover, the use of running water to purge the evil influence contracted from dreams is implied in fr. 649 l. 39.⁷⁰ It was the custom to speak to the Sun of the dangers portended by such dreams (*El.* 86, 401, 424, 427, 637ff., 645), as the Greeks believed that the daylight was effective in purging the evil influence contracted by visions of the night (cf. fr. 65).⁷¹ Purification after evil dreams was necessary, as the person visited by such influence was believed to be, in a way, polluted. The rites of purification, corresponding to those customary after any misfortune of various kinds (e.g. Illness), were apotropaic in character (*El.* 86, and 401).

Another superstitious custom referred to is the keeping of a laurel wreath in the mouth⁷² as a charm or as a means of partaking in Bacchic frenzy (fr. 897). This custom arose, no doubt, from the belief that the Pythia derived her inspiration from the laurel she chewed prior to uttering prophecy.⁷³ Further trace of belief in magic can be seen, perhaps, in the old custom whereby a youth on attaining maturity dedicated a lock of hair to his native river. This offering of a nurture lock to a river, or river-god, developed into a more or less stereotyped ritual probably; but it appears to have been originally, at least, an act of symbolic magic to renew the vital connection with the source of one's strength. In fr. 734,—we see trace of another primitive custom,—that of the monthly offering called Hecate's Supper, placed at the cross-roads for the ghosts that assembled there.⁷⁴

Still another chthonic reference that suggests primitive origin appears in *Ant.* 891 and 1204, where it is clearly suggested that

⁶⁸ Cf. Aes. *Cho.* 523.

⁶⁹ The word *disson* may be understood as meaning 'of double import,' though it is sometimes interpreted as 'occurring twice.'

⁷⁰ Cf. Aes. *Pers.* 201ff., Ar. *Ran.* 1340.

⁷¹ Cf. Eur. *I.T.* 42f., *Med.* 56; Ar. *Ran.* 1338.

⁷² Cf. Theoph. *Char.* 28.

⁷³ Cf. Chapter on Oracles.

⁷⁴ Cf. Lucian *Bis. Accus.*, Tibull, 2.5.63, Plut. *Qu. Conv.* 42.3. 665d.

Antigone becomes the bride of Hades.⁷⁵ Perhaps this may be an allusion to some Theban ritual of underground marriage.⁷⁶ Possibly there is ritual significance also in the references to underground prisons of Lycurgus, of Danaë, and of Antigone (*ib.* 774, 1217f.; *O.C.* 1576). Such prisons may be explained as sacred survivals of the underground hill-hut.⁷⁷ So, too, the tracking of Hermes, as well as the summoning and epiphany of Cylene (fr. 14) may be a disguised echo of a fertility ceremony,⁷⁸ though the scene here may have lost all direct resemblance to ritual and perhaps appeared as sheer comedy to the audience. The rising of Cylene from her cave-mound seems, indeed, a travesty of an actual ritual representing the resurrection of a local earth goddess. This appearance of the nymph is induced by the dancing of the satyrs upon Cylene's mound,—suggesting ritual celebration of the revivification of nature in the Spring.⁷⁹ Such a ceremony doubtless was actually performed at Athens every year, and therefore, frequently witnessed by our poet.⁸⁰

A similiar survival of chthonic ritual appears in the resurrection of Glaucus,—a myth which was the subject of Sophocles' *Manteis*. The little that is extant of this play reflects popular belief in necromancy.⁸¹

Moreover, in the suggestion that bad luck is attached to an article that was once in the possession of an enemy, we see another popular notion (*Aj.* 661f. and 1026ff.). Such a belief is not recorded in the Homeric poems; but it may, nevertheless, be a survival of very early times. Bad luck may, it is said, follow even a friend's gift. This idea is clearly expressed in *Ph.* 776ff., where the unfor-

⁷⁵ Hecate was more prominent in private cult than in public, as is seen from her association with sorcery; cf. Plut., *Quaest Conv.*, 708f; Athenae 646a., scol. on Ar. *Plut.* 594ff.

⁷⁶ Cf. F. M. Cornford, *Essays and Studies Presented to Wm. Ridgeway*, p. 16.

⁷⁷ Cf. P. Corsten, *N. Jahrbuecher f. kl. Alterthum*, XXI, 1913, p. 226ff.

⁷⁸ Cf. Harrison, *Essays and studies presented to Wm. Ridgeway*, p. 151.

⁷⁹ Cf. Harrison, *loc. cit.* p. 146, and *Them.* p. 416f.

⁸⁰ Cf. Pind. fr. 75 and also the picture on a late red-figured crater, *Berlin Antigu. Cat.* 2646.

⁸¹ Many similar references to the calling up of chthonic spirits appear in Gk. literature, particularly in drama. Calling up of the dead was the subject of the *Kressai*, a lost play of Aeschylus, and of the *Poluidus*, a lost play of Euripides. Aristophanes likewise refers to necromancy, Ran. 1477f. Lucian's satire *Philospeusedes* gives a rich collection of similar allusions. A cylix in Brit. Mus. D5 pictures this practice; cf. Murray, *White Athen. Vases*, pl. 16. The ghost lore of today shows lingering traces of belief in the possibility of the dead appearing to the living.

tunate Philoctetes, upon loaning his invincible weapon to Neoptolemus, says: 'First propitiate the bow, lest it should prove a bane to thee, as erst it proved to me and to its first possessor.' Neoptolemus is here asked to deprecate possible ill-luck by propitiating the daimonic character of the bow through some word or gesture that would show his reverence and fear of its power. This curious belief in the magical potency of things is, perhaps, the echo of a forgotten cult.⁸²

Superstition in regard to directions is reflected in several passages in Sophocles. Thus in *Aj.* 183 the ill-fated hero's thoughts are said to be ἐπ' ἀριστερά,—a euphemistic expression showing that this word for 'left' here, as often in Greek literature, signifies 'misfortune.' The east, on the contrary, is a fortunate direction in Greek, as in nearly all religions, being regarded as the source of life and luck.⁸³ Hence the reason for turning towards the east in making the expiatory offerings to the Eumenides (*O.C.* 489).

The value attached to nudity in the celebration of magical rites is likewise attested. We see certain traces of this ancient belief in fr. 534, where reference is made to the importance of nudity or of the laying aside of the upper garment, at least, in sorcery.⁸⁴

In the ceremony here described the use of bronze is specified. This emphasis put upon bronze is also a survival of primitive times. Moreover, Deianeira, in explaining how she preserved the words of the centaur, says that they were kept in her memory with religious reverence,—ὅπως δύσγιπτον ἐκ δέλτου γράψῃ (*Tr.* 158). Oracles, rituals, charms, etc., were often thus engraved upon bronze tablets. After the introduction of iron, bronze was retained for ceremonial purposes by conservative custom, and eventually special supernatural virtues were ascribed to this metal.

A similar sanctity was attached to wool because of the antiquity of its usefulness.⁸⁵ In *O.T.* 3, 19, and 143 we find reference to the suppliant's branches, around which were wreathed festoons of wool. Evidently the suppliant felt close connection with these woolen chaplets⁸⁶ even after they had been laid upon the altar (*ib.* 3).

⁸² Supernatural influence is often ascribed to inanimate objects; cf. e.g. Aes. *P.V.* 936, *Ag.* 904; Eur. *Alc.* 1135.

⁸³ Cf. Theoc. 2.36, Ov *Met.* 7.227, Plut. *Alex.* 17, and Pol. 8.128.

⁸⁴ J. Pley (*De Lanae in Antiquorum ritibus Usu*, Giessen, 1911) explains the original sanctity of wool from its being one of the oldest articles of use to man.

⁸⁵ On the sanctity attached to woolen chaplets cf. Aes. *Supp.* 641 and Eur. *Supp.* 52, *Heracl.* 124, *I.A.* 1216.

A further survival of primitive ideas among the Greeks is the stress laid upon the number three, which in extent, in variety, and in frequency of use surpasses all other symbolic or mystic numbers.⁸⁶ Three, its square, and its cube are frequent in chthonic cult. In Greek drama reference to this number is repeatedly made in such a way as to indicate its symbolic character (e.g. *O.T.* 283, 717; *O.C.* 7f.; *Tr.* 734; fr. 837). In fr. 425 we find a reference to the common Greek practice of pouring the third libation at banquets to Zeus Σωτῆρ. Likewise, the dead receive thrice-poured libations (*Ant.* 431). The Eumenides, too are propitiated in this way (*O.C.* 459), and the favor of these goddesses is further sought by an offering of thrice nine sprays of olive (*ib.* 483). We find occasional reference also to a triad of deities, as in frs. 461, 545, 956. Thus in *O.T.* 160ff. Athena, Artemis, and Apollo are invoked as a 'three-fold help against death.'

As a final example of allusions to superstitious belief and practice, we note the reference to bells in battle⁸⁷ as a device to beguile evil spirits (fr. 874). The custom is spoken of with disdain and was evidently not commonly resorted to by the Greeks. This reference, though it seem a far call from religion proper,⁸⁸ nevertheless has some significance as a survival of faith in the supernatural.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ In modern times the number three, its square, and its cube have been considered mystic,—particularly in chthonic cult. On this matter cf. Diels, *Sibyl. Bk.* 40 n.1; Dittenhuggee, Syll. 615, 23; Stengel, *Festschr. f. Friedlander* 420; Rohde II. 13; Tavenner, *T.A.P.A.* XLVII.117f. For comments by the ancients on the mystic value of three cf. Rohde, *Pyth.* IV.61; Aristot., *De Caelo* I.1; Plut. *Fab.* 4 (Perrine d.); Verg. *Ecl.* VIII.75.

⁸⁷ For the various uses of bells among the Greeks cf. A. S. Pease, *Harv. Stud.* XV. 41.

⁸⁸ Of course there is a wide divergence of opinion possible as to what constitutes a survival of primitive religious conceptions. Cf. S. A. Cook, *Essays and Studies Presented to Wm. Ridgeway*, p. 378: "One's estimate of what constitutes 'survivals' is based on his own national thought and that of his own particular time. Our notion of survivals implicitly assumes some evolution: we are conscious of a gulf between certain phenomena and our own world of thought, and when the features can be associated with a savage land or a by-gone period, we are very ready to suppose that they are the relic of a past beyond which there has been an advance. Different people for different reasons have regarded as 'survivals'— . . . belief in the evil eye, a personal deity, a personal religion, or of all religion."

⁸⁹ Many other references to religious ideas and customs mentioned in the earlier chapters, might very well be classed as survivals and accordingly discussed here. By doing so, however, we would have overloaded this already lengthy chapter.

APPENDIX

The manuscript of Soph. referred to most frequently in the notes is L., Codex Laurentianus, the most valuable of the MSS., and believed by many to be the archetype of all the other Codices of Soph. extant. It was written in the tenth or eleventh century, and contains, besides the seven plays of Soph., the seven plays of Aeschylus, as well as the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius, and scholia by different hands. In this Ms. are found also corrections, apparently of the same date as that of the codex.

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